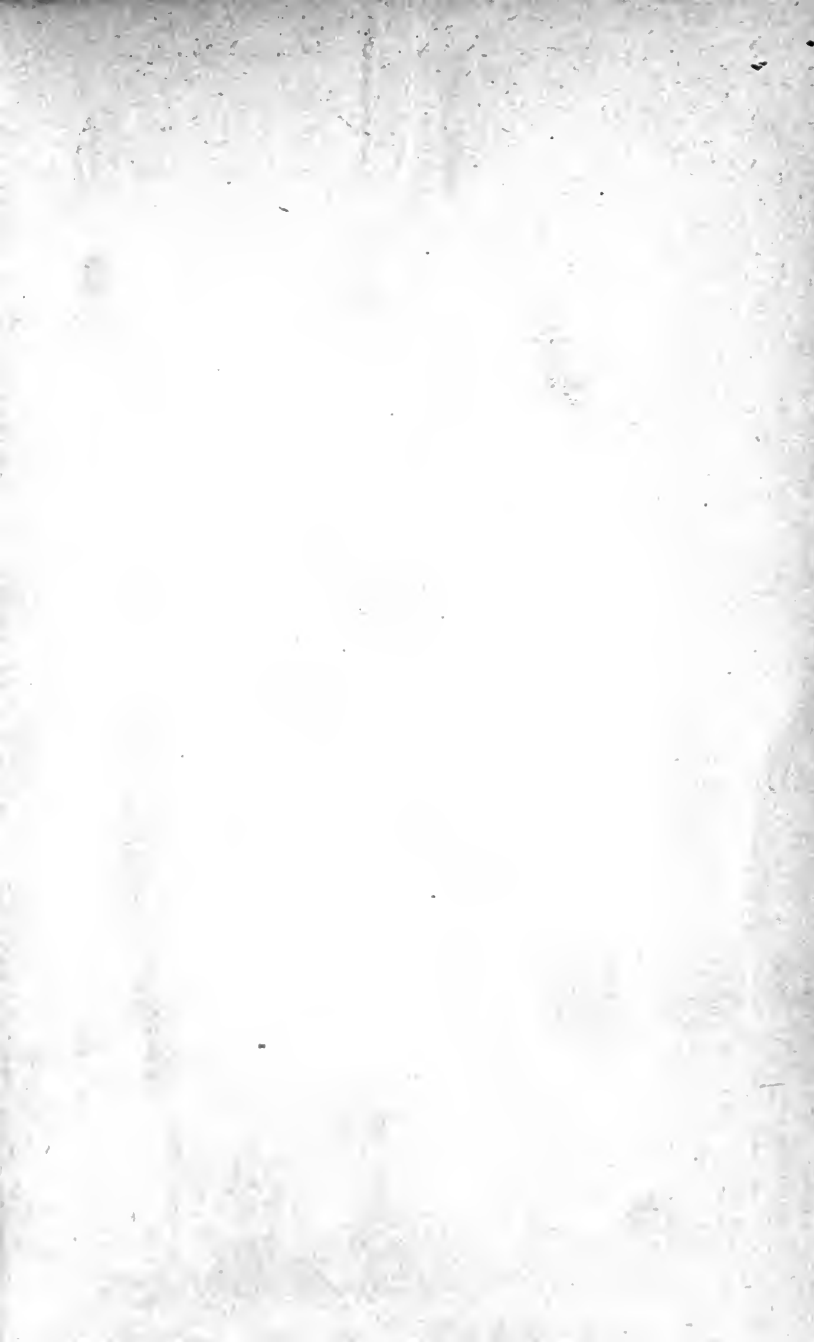


LETTERS
FROM
A VEILED
POLITICIAN

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LETTERS FROM A VEILED
POLITICIAN.



Politics
57

LETTERS FROM A VEILED POLITICIAN.

"The best teacher is time:
the best book is the world."

Talmud.

DUM SPIRO SPERO.

THE
BEST
TEACHER
IS
TIME
THE
BEST
BOOK
IS
THE
WORLD
TALMUD

EVERETT & CO.,
42, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.

—
1910.



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FIRST LETTER

DIEU ET MON DROIT.

TO MY COMPATRIOTS.

LONDON,
1910.

DEAR COMPATRIOTS,—

You may be wondering why I am a politician and wherefore veiled ?

You certainly have the right to make enquiries on both these points, and you shall be enlightened forthwith.

“Chien de chasse, chasse de race.” I am a politician by birth, breeding and conviction.

From my earliest childhood I was fed on politics and nourished by the sight of our great patriots. As quite a small youngster, enjoined “to be seen and not heard,” I listened to the discussions of politicians and drank in all I could understand with my whole attention. I imbibed much more that I could not understand at the time, but which proved nutritious, after it had been ruminated upon in the slow process of mental digestion.

I remember as a five-year-old being held up to the windows at home in order that I might see

Gladstone drive to a huge political meeting, which took place in my native city, and in imagination I can still hear the ringing cheers of the crowd which accompanied him on his triumphant return journey after his speech, back to the house of one of my relatives where he was staying. For it was in the days of his greatness, ay, and in the days of England's greatness, too !

How interesting it is to note that the great men and the great epochs in the history of any country have invariably gone together hand in hand, indissolubly bound !

Is it the country that makes the great men, or do the great men make the country ? Something of both, I take it, at any rate it was in the zenith of Gladstone's greatness, for had he not reduced the income tax to sixpence in the pound ?

Just think of it, Compatriots, an income tax of sixpence in the pound !

This fact is in itself sufficient to give employment to thousands upon thousands of our people.

Certainly Gladstone was a wonder in his prime, and a great man as Chancellor and when dealing

with matters of the Church, but truly dangerous when he meddled with Home Rule, Foreign Policy and Imperial affairs. He committed one error. He had too long a life.

He lived to destroy by mistakes the glory he had won by genius. Can anything be more sorrowful ?

Yes, the sun shone on England in the "Seventies" of last century. Our country was blessed by our greatest Queen, governed by a band of wise and brilliant statesmen, and enjoyed such prosperity, expansion and welfare as she had never before experienced, and which have not been hers again since the "Seventies."

But to return to my youth. I remember another time being taken to hear John Bright speak, and he created upon me a very lasting impression by his grave presence, quiet demeanour, yet vehement rhetoric. I knew nothing of the questions of the hour, but a child's intuition told me "That was the man to trust." I can also recollect many interesting and various notabilities staying under my father's roof.

All these occurrences bent the twig in the direction it has grown.

So that a politician I am and a politician I fain would remain. But, let it be understood, a politician in the largest meaning of the word, an honest patriot, a broad-minded Imperialist, one who loves England with a whole heart, one who places King, Country and Empire before party obligations, if, as is so often the case, they cannot be reconciled together.

Now to answer your second enquiry. Why am I veiled ?

Alas ! Compatriots, I have been unfortunate !

The House of Commons has never received me within its honoured walls, and the time is not yet ripe for me to be welcomed by the House of Lords.

Therefore, I am, indeed, veiled—very deeply veiled in sorrow, in grief, and in darkness, but *not* in silence. I can no longer remain silent when I see peril stalking our country down. A grim and gruesome peril, which clutches at our vital organs and is sapping our national existence—a peril so grave, so serious, and so insidious that it should be faced, investigated, and overcome.

At present, then, Compatriots, we are formally introduced to each other, and, as you know all about me, I should very much like to ask you a few questions about yourselves.

Are you still guided by the same healthy instincts which have hitherto dominated the Anglo-Saxon race and which have made it all that it is ?

These instincts are a profound love of liberty and freedom, which culminate in a great desire to be left alone to carry on your own work and to go your own way provided it harms no one, and a sound sense of justice that demands fair play in all important matters.

Does this same love of liberty which has been our beacon of light in the past still exist amongst us to lead us in the present ? Or are our lights bedimmed and our senses blunted ?

Have you become so docile, so indifferent, so lethargic that you prefer to suffer in silence injustice, that you know to be wrong, instead of having the energy to suppress it, and the courage to insist upon a change being made in the prevalent methods ?

Anglo-Saxons used not to care to govern when they could appoint responsible people to do it for them. Only when the appointed rulers became despotic and their burdens grew heavier than they could bear have they invariably risen in a mass to protest against the unjust tyranny, the infringement of freedom, and the usurpation of liberty.

The despot has been beheaded, the tyrants removed, the dangerous Parliaments dissolved, and then, when the wrong was put right—and not before—they returned to their own work and looked after their own homesteads and their own interests.

This was the ancient Anglo-Saxon way, and a very good, a very worthy plan, too.

Are you still ready to do the same, Compatriots ?

Is this good way of the olden days still yours ? Or is there at present a radical change in the constitution of each one of us which permits us to tolerate governors and ministers who misrule, who curtail our privileges, and hamper the nation by ignorant methods ?

Is there a spirit abroad amongst us which allows statesmen to strike ruin at the very foundations of

our existence without causing alarm to our people ?

I cannot believe that this is really the case, for surely, if it is so, we must henceforth write of England that she *has been* a great country in the Nineteenth century, but that she no longer aspires to remain great in the Twentieth.

No, Compatriots, I cannot believe that you are in reality indifferent, callous, or lethargic.

Rather would I prefer to consider that you are *unacquainted* with the serious dangers that menace us, that you have not *noticed* the mistakes our Ministers are making, and that you do not *allocate* the troubles that are oppressing us to their right sources.

I would rather choose to think that if these matters of gravest import were clearly presented to you so that you could realise their oppression, could see their iniquity, and could observe their dire results, that then you would once again behave as in the good old days of yore and throw off your apathy, awake from your apparent indifference, and chase away the enemy from your door.

For never has the country faced so much danger or so many serious issues since the Reform Bill—eighty years ago.

Enough, my dear Compatriots, my half sheet of notepaper is finished, so that I must content myself with stating that I have every confidence in your ultimate decisions and in the wisdom of your final choice, when once you perceive the error of our present methods. For the love of my fellow-countrymen has ever engaged all my sympathies and dominated all my actions.

I beg to remain,

Yours in all affection,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

SECOND LETTER.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

MY LORDS,—

You are not as yet abolished by the dangerous gang of Socialists who now infest our shores, neither are you annihilated by the yapping and yelling of two ill-mannered curs who are included in the Cabinet of the Liberal Ministry, and therefore you may still be addressed by your very humble servant and sincere admirer, myself—who prays that you may always be spared to compose the Upper House and to honour England by assisting in her government.

It is possibly true that some internal changes might strengthen your noble Assembly and enhance even your reputation. It might be advisable to see the Ex-Governors and High Commissioners of our Dominions beyond the Seas, take their places in your midst on their return home, covered by their glory—or permission might be given to Life Peers to join your ranks, or one might hope to see that

small body of your number who are unfit to have the power of ruling, removed from your ranks by your own veto. In other words, that you might have further powers of selection or election from amongst the scions of your race who you consider "undesirables."

But, if reforms are needed, you, my Lords, are the best people to make the changes, for, taking you all round, you are one of the finest bodies of men that exist in any country, and you may be considered one of the strongest and most powerful assets which the constitution of this country can command.

Each one of your number already holds high station in this realm, in his own prerogative, and, therefore, none of your members are office-seekers in the usual sense of the word. You have nothing to gain by office, having by heredity all that office could give you. This fact alone renders you far more reliable as Ministers and far more disinterested in holding office under the Crown, than Members of the Lower House, whose ambitious Members seek office as the bee seeks honey, and who cling to it long after they have the right to be there.

You, my Noble Lords, give your time, your labours, and your services, for the love of your country and not to exploit yourselves.

How many Ministers of the present Cabinet can be said to do the same ?

Your opinion on any given subject is as unbiassed, as broad-minded, and as sane as any opinion which can be found in this country. For, are you not recruited from all the most successful men of the day?—commerce, science, the professions are all ably represented. If any man is peculiarly beneficent particularly successful, or greatly distinguished among his fellow men, His Majesty graciously creates him a Peer. So that you are, as a matter of fact, extremely representative of the best energy, brains and enterprise that Great Britain produces.

It is a matter of much congratulation that you do not possess or encourage the fireworks, the smart repartee, or the “ gift of the gab ” which now occupy so much time, and take up so much attention in the Lower House. But, for sound sense, calm thought, and helpful reflection you are incomparably superior to those who would abolish you, whilst at times you

can, and actually do, rise to the level of rhetoric. The speeches recently uttered on the Finance Bill in your House of Lords by your noble members, and in the electoral campaign, have been as far superior to those delivered by the Socialists and Liberals as a mastiff is superior to a cur.

The orations given by Lord Lansdowne, Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, and others are read with gratitude and satisfaction by every thoughtful person in the land, for it is a relief to find that there still exist such weight, such observance, and such judgment among us. It is admitted by all countries that a second chamber is necessary, and when this does not exist naturally, it is promptly created. Where could we find a new creation to be one quarter as efficient as that which we possess? For generations have helped to form you and centuries have given of their best to mould you. Your independence is inherited and is assured. And it is the men who are independent enough to speak their own minds, courageous enough to point out error, and powerful enough to disregard gibes, jeers and jests, who help us to find the safe path, to recover

our mistakes, and to redeem our forgotten heritage.

Let the best that we can produce, govern, and the rest will follow, but we should make certain that we are obtaining the best—the very best.

The temper and the views of the House of Commons change and vary with each election, and, owing to the natural swing of the pendulum, or the re-action that sets in from the mistakes of the preceding government, the temper is apt to be stronger in the House of Commons than is the voice of the country behind it. Your temper and your views are unaffected with such rapidly changing tides, and, therefore, you are often more in touch with the man in the street than his chosen representatives, you remain steadfast, true and moderate.

Therefore, it is absolutely in the interests of our country and for the welfare of Great Britain and the Empire that you should remain a permanent institution in the future as you have always been in the past.

The British public know this, though the Liberal Party representatives do not.

I beg to remain, Noble Lords,

Your humble and obedient servant,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.



THIRD LETTER.

“DAS EWIG-WEIBLICHE
ZIEHT UNS HINAN.”

Goethe.

“THERE IS A WOMAN AT THE
BEGINNING OF ALL GREAT THINGS.”

Lamartine.

TO THE SUFFRAGETTES.

MY DEAR SUFFRAGETTES,—

I am very anxious to gain your good opinion, but I fear greatly that I shall not meet with your approbation, for I have never had the honour nor the glory of being sent to gaol, and I have only once found myself behind prison bars.

That was on the memorable occasion when I was asked to accompany some ladies to seats in the compartment of the House of Commons which, I believe, honourable members are pleased to designate as the “Ladies’ Gallery,” but which may be more accurately described as a painful pen for offenders. I then came to the conclusion that I preferred my liberty to unmerited confinement (in direct contrast to yourselves, brave Suffragettes), and I have since refused to invite ladies to accept the lavish hospitality which Members of Parliament provide for their fair visitors! Therefore, you may perceive, that I am no militant member of your Society. Only if the men of Great Britain would rise from

their apathy and indifference and be as martial as you are in defending their country from the grave perils that beset it, and if our male population would exhibit as much courage, tenacity of purpose, where it is absolutely required, as do the Suffragettes, where it is superfluous, then all our national dangers would be rectified forthwith, and all enemies be a thing of the past !

But at present it appears to be the weaker vessel who is the stronger sex.

Let me assure you, gentlemen, that this is a very ominous sign. The men of Great Britain have, indirectly, to thank themselves for this movement of Women Suffragettes, now so rampant amongst us !

Let me explain the case.

A woman's sympathetic nature prompts her to help, to succour, to aid, either in illness, difficulty, or hardship.

As long as we have strong men to govern us, women naturally honour and respect them and remain at home contentedly doing the thousand

things for which they are eminently fitted, but *when the men fail them* and will not be energetic enough to take their own burdens upon their shoulders in the government of the Empire, in the defence of their country, and in the management of important affairs at home, then—and not till then—has there always been a Woman-Movement prompted by the natural instincts of the sex to assist where difficulties present themselves, which is equivalent to saying—“Let me help to do the work which you are neglecting.”

I diagnosed the Suffragette Movement in this manner, two years ago, and my views were corroborated by a shrewd American whom I met when visiting the United States last year. He remarked to me, “I’ve just been across the fishpond to have a look at your little Island. It is the queerest, of all queer places. The grown up men devote their best energies to playing around with balls of various sizes and shapes whilst their country is going to the dogs as fast as it can. But the women, with their quicker powers of perception, see that danger lies ahead, and try to put matters right by shouting ‘Votes

for Women ' and making a devil of a row—but what they actually want are some real live men !!! ”

I shook hands with that American. He had hit the nail on the head.

If we could have competent statesmen to govern, strong soldiers to fight for their country, and capable men to direct our affairs and put them straight, there would be an end of the Suffragette Movement. It would fade away in a decline.

It is one of the numerous signs that danger menaces us, and, therefore, a very useful finger-post to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Woman's natural instincts are to leave the care of the State in any hands which are strong and capable, but when her son refuses to fight for his country (universal military training) and when her husband declines to work for its welfare, *then*, rather than have her home wrecked, she tries to shoulder the burden herself in her brave, courageous way, and will (alas ! how often does) keep the danger from her door by self-sacrifice and heroic effort, throwing herself into the breach.

As long as the government of our country was in competent, sagacious hands, we heard nothing of Suffragettes.

The movement has only become prominent the last seven years. Feeble governments, incompetent ministers, and third-class politicians have been much in evidence for exactly the same period.

Pardon, fair Suffragettes ; I know you will refute this motive-force and deny my statements, but they are true, nevertheless, and

“Ce n'est que la vérité qui blesse,”
therefore I must suffer your anger in silence.

I hold no brief, either for, or against the Suffragettes, but I hold in contempt any man who will let a woman work for him. I sincerely admire the *instincts* (not the results) which prompt the Suffragettes to act, when the men of England prefer to doze.

If each Anglo-Saxon man will ask himself whether his neighbour is serving his country to the full extent of his powers, and if he will take steps to act according to his honest conviction on this point, the Suffragettes will vanish and the movement will have done its work.

Not the work it set out to perform, but something far more valuable !

It will have awakened the men !

Let the Suffragettes cease crying " Votes for Women," and instead urge their menkind to repeat the following refrain—

" And ah ! for a man to arise in me,

That the man I am may cease to be ! "

Then, indeed, will the Empire be safeguarded, the country defended, manhood courageous, womanhood blessed, and all things be for the best.

For in any country, at any period, date or century, it may be observed that the two sexes act and react upon each other in such close proximity, such unforeseen ways and with such strange results that—

Strong men produce charming women.

Cowards create viragos.

Clever women educate great leaders.

Masculine women encourage effeminate men.

The qualities of one sex, if not dominant in those to whom they by right belong, will be adopted by the other, to the detriment of both.

We have had enough of women adopting male attributes and too much of men wearing petticoats. Let us reverse the positions and return to the natural order of things, the men to have warlike propensities and to be ready to fight, and the women to be domestic and rule the home, and our country will once more be Great Britain as it was in the last century.

I would say, "Awake, arise, quick march! ye manhood of the British Isles, ye of the Anglo-Saxon race, accept your responsibility, shoulder your arms and prepare to be in readiness to protect your country. For, until you behave like men and are ready to fight, your womenkind cannot respect nor reverence you. Instead of sending Lord Kitchener to fill a sinecure of a position, basking in the sun at Malta, bring leaders such as he back to lighten the gloom and disperse the blackness in England, to organise Universal National Service and give him a free hand to place this important matter on a fair footing and let him render you a valuable service in banding you together to prepare for a common foe. In him you have a fine man, use him and let him do

his best. The time is ripe and the General is here. You must follow him, for only one thing more is wanted. The consent of the manhood of our country to come to its rescue and to uphold, ay, and to flourish her banner in the face of her rivals now, immediately and for all time. And to the fine flower of British womanhood I would say : ‘ Peace be with you. Lay down your arms. Surrender your burden to those who should fight. Remain in tranquility, for your manhood will become militant instead of forcing it upon you. Therefore, devote your energies to attaining a high standard of excellence in other walks of life. No longer need you be viragos for you can respect men who will fight for you and for their country.’ ”

In the meantime may I beg to remain, brave Suffragettes, if not your sincere well-wisher in your military undertakings, at least

Your ardent admirer in times of peace,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

FOURTH LETTER.

“THE PRESENT MOMENT IS
A POWERFUL DUTY.”

Goethe.

TO RT. HON. A. J. BALFOUR.

DEAR MR. BALFOUR,—

As student, philosopher and theologian, you are universally admired. You delight in mental gymnastics and revel in the exercise of your fine intellect and you enjoy the pleasures of thought in such high degree that the advantages of decided action do not appeal to you.

You were greatly influenced by your noble uncle the late Marquis of Salisbury, and have been surrounded from your youth by many clever and brilliant cousins, who may be said to have formed the "Hotel Cecil," and in this family mansion you absorbed an air of cultured refinement which has always remained with you. Indeed, it might possibly appear to the shrewd observer that you were surrounded by a rarified atmosphere which tended to become unnatural in its exclusiveness and sometimes led to the abnormal, in actuality, through its isolation.

You are a bachelor, and therefore do not know either the anxieties or the blessings which home-life of the best type can bestow. You are without a good wife, a prize which Solomon valued as above the price of pearls and rubies, and are therefore rather poverty stricken, although a loving sister superintends your household and devotes her life to you, but a sister is always a sister and can never touch the circles of intimate thought and influence, wherein a wife might dwell. Being without children, you are untroubled by the responsibilities a family brings with it, but therefore you ignore the wholesome instincts, the healthy knowledge and the invaluable training which the care and education of children bring to a loving parent.

It has been found on the whole the wisest plan for people to be normal in all these circumstances, else are they somewhat apt to grasp life from an unusual point of view in their old age.

Owing to these fortuitous circumstances you are, as it were, somewhat apart from the interests which govern humanity, somewhat in isolation from ordinary mankind in your powers of perception, and

you might perhaps be regarded almost as a square man (possibly a spare man) in a round hole.

The hole is so round and you are so spare that it is in vain that you put forth your best endeavours to make the two complete each other. The real place of Prime Minister of Great Britain remains very inadequately filled by your worthy personality, whilst the minor hole of Leader of the House of Commons or Leader of the Opposition is exactly to your liking and you occupy this post with the very best results.

Indeed, there appear to be two Mr. Balfours, much in the same way that there were Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

The first Mr. Balfour is a signal success in the Lower House, understands its party methods, its peculiar procedure and the arguments which appeal to it as well, or perhaps better than any Member of Parliament there, and has in consequence gained a tremendous reputation within its four walls. But let us ask this worthy gentleman to step forth on to the pavement outside the House and confront that celebrated person "the man in the street" and he

becomes at once the Mr. Balfour who, as Prime Minister of England, or Leader of the Opposition and the greatest representative of the Unionists in the country, is as distinct a failure as the first is a signal success !

He is too remote, too isolated and too divided from ordinary manhood to be able to gauge the public opinions, the public sentiments, and the public wishes of the Nation he is supposed to lead. For it should be realised very sadly and stated very sorrowfully that this second Mr. Balfour is not—and never has been—and never can be, a real Leader in the highest sense of the word, to the people of Great Britain or to our many brethren that comprise our Empire beyond the seas. He has never been in touch with his country, he cannot understand it, and he is neither revered nor loved by its people.

Why ? He does not possess the qualities which make a leader great. He is unpopular.

He happens to be deficient in that intangible magnetism, that indefinable strength, and that compelling enthusiasm which help to form a great leader.

The beloved and dignified mantle of the late Marquis of Salisbury fell upon his shoulders only to be torn into shreds by dissatisfied followers and tattered into fragments by a dozen different party sets and factions. I lay the loss of the recent elections to the fact that we have no competent leader.

Here are a few of the names of the parties now existent :—

The Conservative Tariff Reformers.

The Conservative Free Traders.

The Liberal Unionist Tariff Reformers.

The Liberal Unionist Free Traders.

The Nonconformists.

The Socialists.

The Radicals.

The Nationalists.

And others.

These various parties, cliques and factions have sprung into existence for want of two capably strong leaders who could amalgamate their differences, dominate their dissatisfaction and weld them into two separate and distinct parties. It is the strong leader who creates the strong Party.

An incompetent leader makes inferior followers, just as a bad workman quarrels with his tools.

It is not the soldiers who alone win or lose a battle. It is their famous general who wins the battle, with their help and heroism.

If we had a general we could love and revere, trust and follow, party factions would disappear, difference of opinions on minor points die away, and difficulties be overcome. The courage, the zeal and the devotion of the leader would be rewarded by bringing forth the same sterling qualities of adherence in his followers.

Let a thoroughly competent patriot arise in our midst, one with all the characteristics of the greatest leaders of bygone days, and our differences will vanish, our similarities will be accentuated, and our aspirations embodied beneath his banner and expressed in his personality. Such men were Salisbury, Chamberlain, Gladstone, Bright. Famous patriots who could be followed without regrets or compunction.

But Mr. Balfour and Mr. Asquith are of quite a different stamp and have few strong followers

because they are not strong leaders. Since the disappearance of our great men through death, or ill-health, both parties have been left drifting and rudderless, a prey to the manifold dangers that beset them and victims of European scorn.

In the name of England's welfare at home and her prestige abroad, it might be advisable to change the centre of gravity from the House of Commons, where it has become besmirched with mud and ruined by incompetency these last seven years, and remove it to the Upper House where at least the office in question would be upheld with dignity and distinction by at least one or even two noble Lords.

Can we forget it was Mr. Balfour who knew so little about the wishes of his countrymen, and who was so slightly in touch with their sentiments that he and his colleagues actually remained in office for three years (1902-1905) after their mandate was withdrawn and after the country desired to see them clinging to their honied posts ?

The cataclysm of Socialism which has since overtaken us (1905-1909) was very largely due to his disastrous lack of action in surrendering office. For

the pendulum invariably swings to and fro, but only when it has been held back out of its natural place, mischievously, by one party, does it always rebound most injuriously against them at the next election.

Yes, Mr. Balfour and his party were very largely responsible for the disastrous state of affairs which has since prevailed, and for the loss of the recent elections.

And when a Constituency who has accepted a prominent man for many years as its representative, slams the door in his face very suddenly, as did Manchester, 1906, the time has come to consider the reason. On this occasion this constituency expressed the voice of the country without any manner of doubt, and it was therefore a rebuke which deserves attention.

Are we prepared to see the reins of Government placed in the same faulty hands again and committed to the care of anyone whose judgment is so out of tune with the wishes of his countrymen ?

But we should all still wish to see him leader of the House of Commons in Opposition or in power, for in that capacity he is admirable.

Dear Mr. Balfour, I hope you may forgive me for actually stating in words the thoughts which are very prevalent in people's minds and which, therefore, deserve expression.

Is it too much to hope that you may think well of my suggestion that you should relinquish the now tattered mantle of your late revered uncle and pass it on to your friend, the Marquis of Lansdowne, who would certainly wear it with a much better grace and a far greater dignity ?

Believe me to be,

Your candid but sincere friend,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

FIFTH LETTER.

“TO GET MONEY, STUDY AND ACT
OUT THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.”

TO EVERY TAXPAYER.

MY POOR DEAR TAXPAYERS,—

You and I are both tarred with the same brush, we are both stabbed with the same dagger, and are both murdered by the same hand, that tries to protect us.

For we both pay taxes, and such monstrous taxes too !

Will you, therefore, believe me when I tell you that I most thoroughly wish you well in every respect and that it touches my heart (and also my pocket) to have to inform you that our present system of taxation is a great many things it should not be, and that it is not at all what it might be. I will ask you to give me your patience, at all events, dear Taxpayers, whilst reading my letter, so that we may be in sympathy with each other even when you do not agree with what I write you, for we are really both sufferers in the same cause.

True, we shall eventually have Tariff Reform, and Tariff Reform will be a very decided step in the right direction. It will allay some of the evils from which we suffer, it will give increased employment, greater welfare and more wealth to our country and our countrymen than they have enjoyed since 1879. But Tariff Reform alone is not sufficient ; it must be followed by Financial Reform. Great Britain requires Fiscal Reform as badly, or even more urgently than she requires Tariff Reform. And the two would work admirably together. Tariff Reform leads to Fiscal Reform in the direction of our trade ; let us then carry it rather further and deal with our National Finance. The two reforms would make excellent company, marching side by side, as they should do.

My friends, for many years (since Sir William Harcourt inaugurated the Death Duties and raised the Income Tax) we have as a nation been playing havoc with these few words—

Wealth and poverty.

Capital and Interest.

Revenue and Expenditure.

We have been fingering them and upsetting them as a child plays with its letters, placing one here and one there, but producing no word that can be spelt.

Our Statesmen for the last thirty years have wilfully ignored the A B C of Finance, so that no correct words have been spelt and no sound system of Finance has been followed.

Any individual, any householder, any business undertaking which ran its financial affairs on the same plan or on the same unsound system, would find himself in the Bankruptcy Court and harassed out of existence in a twelvemonth.

We are a rich country, with a very strong constitution, and can endure, ay, have endured, great hardships, even for thirty years, but the methods we allow our statesmen to employ and the ruin they mete out to us, are bound to end sooner or later in individual extinction and national death even for us.

Why? Because they are most assuredly the wrong methods. Murder, even by slow poison, is bound to be discovered in the end, but it may only

be brought to light when there is no hope of recovery and the wealth of Great Britain is a thing of the past.

Gentlemen, it is late in the day to put our house, our national house and our national purse, in order, too late by at least twenty years, but, "Better late than never." It is still possible !

If we can find or can appoint a Chancellor who will forthwith reform the whole of our Fiscal System and place it upon sound financial lines, we may yet recover part of our lost strength, we may still enjoy a great national existence. But let us act quickly, for the health of our country and its financial constitution is so terribly impaired that already there is, to the practised eye, every sign of decay.

In the first place, it is essential to have a man who knows and understands about Finance. We do not require a man of many tongues or a "gasbag." A financier who really understands his business will always be able to answer the House of Commons clearly and well on any point that arises, and if he gives proper time and attention to

the Treasury Accounts he will not have leisure for constant orations.

For the National Accounts are overwhelming !

Failing the possibility of having a man of good common sense or a financier as Chancellor, let us increase the strength and wisdom of the members of the Treasury Board of Finance, so that their opinion carries real weight with the Chancellor. At present, their advice is a farce in all cases where it is most required. A strong board of permanent officials, composed of distinguished financiers, might be very helpful if their concurring sanction was necessary for new measures. But let us appoint brilliant men who have been successful elsewhere, on the Treasury Board, not permanent officials who are enveloped in red tape.

It is urgent to change our whole Fiscal policy, for at present we are taxed so unjustly, so unwisely and so wrongfully that our taxes are nothing short of personal plunder and highway robbery, sanctioned by the State.

And what do we do ?

We sit still and consent to be ruined individually, collectively and nationally.

Gentlemen, taxpayers, as you all are, what we are pleased to dignify by the name of our Fiscal System, is no system at all. It is chaos and robbery !

It robs the dead when it should tax the quick.

It is notoriously unfair to hit a man when he is down. Are you Englishmen going to continue to countenance such methods ? Never ! You love fair play, and when once the iniquities of our present financial system are pointed out to you, you will arise and demand a change.

It taxes the widow, the orphan, the poor man ; let us ask to have the burden transferred to the broad, stalwart shoulders of the successful man, the rich sportsman.

It oppresses those that are thrifty, those that are careful and those that are far-sighted, let us help these people who help themselves.

It taxes our Colonies, our Dependencies and our own countrymen whom we wish to help and assist.

Let us, instead, suggest that the stranger, the

foreigner and our deadly rivals contribute to our funds.

Shall we not change this monstrous Fiscal System and place it upon a basis which is at once just, honest and lucrative ? It will immediately follow the law of natural increase, thereby becoming productive, creative, and helpful, instead of being penurious, wasteful and prohibitive. It will encourage thrift, prudence and foresight, instead of paying a premium to laziness, idleness and improvidence. It will increase all our natural resources instead of penalising them. It will nourish our possibilities and cherish their growth instead of hampering them, expatriating them, and scattering our substance to the four quarters of the globe.

A sound system of National Finance will produce, create, and provide sufficient wealth for all our needs, so that we shall live with an excess of wealth, instead of always being poverty stricken.

It will be paid cheerfully, willingly and contentedly, because it will be levied wisely, justly and fairly.

It will oppress no one, it will assist us all.

We shall possess the sinews of war when war is at hand (and come it will), we shall have the great prosperity of peace when peace dwells amongst us, as it often does.

All this will take place, simply because we shall be working *with Nature*, obeying her laws and adopting her own wise methods instead of going directly against her, at war with her truths and fighting her incontrovertible axioms.

Instead of seeing our Empire falling away, weakening and sub-dividing, we can see it grow, prosper and consolidate.

Instead of seeing Great Britain losing its strength, its health, its best citizens, and replacing them with useless aliens and paupers, we can attract the best energy and enterprise, the strongest natures, the finest intellects in the world.

Instead of being left with babes and paupers, and with the feeble, incompetent and old aged, let us have youth and strength and manhood.

Instead of our country growing poorer and poorer as it is doing very rapidly, let us assist it to become richer and richer.

Instead of each individual being continuously hard up and sore oppressed, they can all be at ease and flourishing.

Instead of the land being neglected and unsaleable, it will once again flow with milk and honey.

And all this can be done by a sound system of Financial Policy, for Finance is, must be, and has always been, at the very roots of a nation's prosperity and welfare. It is the heart of our constitution, and from it all power proceeds.

Will you not give a fair system a trial, drive away incompetent Ministers who have not even learnt the fundamental difference between Capital and Interest, and who insist in taking the former and spending it as the latter? Their policy in this direction is suicidal for all.

Will you not come forward, taxpayers, and demand that your Chancellors have common sense, that changes be made and a sound system be tried? Do not allow another incompetent person to fill this

important post. (They have been more than enough already). Insist upon having the *very best*. It can be found if you desire it.

And how shall all these radical changes be effected? I hear you ask. By methods, so simple, so just, so moderate, that you will be amazed that they have not been tried before—but methods which are based on natural laws, common sense and wisdom.

And the first axiom of any financier, of any good business man or of any clever householder is to spend that which is income, and to lay aside, to invest and to increase that which is capital.

In other words, capital is not to be touched. It is to be invested to yield income.

Income may be spent, but a part should be saved against the rainy day. What does our State do?

It actually takes the Capital which its inhabitants have spent their lives earning, saving, accumulating, and it spends it like water on current yearly expenses.

How does the Treasury do this?

By continuing to levy the Death Duties. These are taken from the Capital Wealth of the Country and are spent as Annual Income !!!

Could anything be more fatal to national welfare ?

They were the invention of Mephistopheles, masquerading in the shape of one of our most dangerous Chancellors, Sir William Harcourt.

Instead of lying down to be whipped by this monstrous piece of robbery organised by the State and paying away all the nation's capital until nothing will remain to lay our hands upon, let us arise *en bloc* and cry, "Halt ! Halt !" It shall not be done.

We will cast a glance around and observe how these unsound methods are impoverishing both us and our country.

Already, we see many of "The Stately Homes of England" standing empty, bare and deserted because their present possessors (those who have had to pay one turn of the Death Duties) cannot afford to live in them, with the gardens which were once the pride of the neighbourhood and employed a dozen or more gardeners, now overgrown with

weeds, neglected and a deserted wilderness, whilst the gardeners are thrown out of work or sent back to the towns to follow some other pursuit which is not nearly so healthy or edifying.

Meanwhile, the national prosperity in the shape of the house, grounds and gardens are deteriorating every month in value through enforced parsimony.

Already, we see the village which practically depended for its existence upon "the big house," empty, forlorn, wrecked and starving.

In plainer words, we are now taxed so unjustly that we cannot afford to live in our own homes or pay the labour which we once employed.

These numerous mansions stand empty, forlorn, uninhabited, colossal monuments of valuable national property which deteriorates rapidly through enforced neglect.

Does all this sorrow benefit Great Britain ?

Decidedly not ! It only benefits the foreigner, who pays no Death Duties and no Income Tax in his own country, and who has, therefore, been able to grow so rich by the natural law of increase that he can come to our country and buy "our Stately

Homes of England " at half their value. We are not only ruining our own countrymen, but we are also slowly obtaining a population that is not Anglo-Saxon nor Celtic, and which does not love our country as we love it, nor benefit it as our own race does.

Is this going to improve Great Britain ?

No ! No ! No !

Again, owing to the unjust Death Duties, you see our treasured works of art dragged down from the ancestral walls which they have graced for generation after generation, and put up for sale to meet the imperative demands of this iniquitous tax.

Who buys our works of art ?

1. The foreigners, who pay no Death Duties and no Income Tax.

2. The Americans who, likewise, have no such taxes to hamper their resources, but who have Tariff Reform and sound finance to enrich themselves and their country.

3. The Jews, who are ever parasitical as a race, and fatten on other people's misfortunes.

Will Great Britain be in the future what she has been in the past when our best blood, Anglo-Saxons and Celts, has been driven from her shores and her population has become cosmopolitan, American and Jewish ?

Friends, countrymen, taxpayers, the present state of affairs is too grievous, too monstrous, too unjust to be further borne.

Let me beseech you to adopt the old Anglo-Saxon way and change it. For if all, or even half the taxpayers of Great Britain wish it changed, it will be done. We should arise against our unwise oppressors, and either convert them to sound sense or remove them.

For this unjust burden of Death Duties fall on the upper and great middle classes of England. The classes which have been the backbone of our country for many generations, the classes whence spring the energy, the enterprise and the initiative that has made England great. The classes which possess the highest sense of duty and of self-sacrifice ; the classes which have always served England so

valiantly. Is this sturdy backbone of our country to have all its spinal cords broken by the rod of tyrannous finance ?

And now at this juncture I fancy I hear groans from my poor friends, the taxpayers, who remark :

“ What you say has much truth in it. We have long worn a shoe that pinches us very badly, and consequently we have been limping along with a stick instead of walking upright with a firm tread on both feet, but you must have forgotten that the Death Duties bring in from twelve to eighteen millions a year, and, if we abolished this, what is to take its place ? ”

Quite right, taxpayers, Nature abhors a vacuum. It, therefore, never answers to desecrate, demolish and destroy an edifice, a house, a law, or even a monstrous piece of taxation unless one is ready to replace, re-construct and create something better to take its place and to supply the vacuum that is left. I would ask you to have a little faith in your unknown friend, the veiled politician, who chances to have a hobby for renovating, re-building and re-decorating houses, and the training which this

healthy hobby has given now stands in good stead. I am not one to destroy without creating, to criticise existing faults without suggesting something better, to deprive anybody of pocket-money without at once supplying methods which will fill their pockets with better money. And what is the solution of the difficulty ?

A very simple Reform, but a Reform of the greatest magnitude and import.

Cease spending Capital as Income. Abolish the Death Duties, and do not steal.

Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's. The Death Duties are financially unsound and socialistically dangerous. Therefore they must be abolished.

They began in 1894 through Sir William Harcourt.

In 1909 it was suggested that they should be augmented, and this in fifteen short years.

If progression is made down this same hill of highway robbery, we shall very soon reach the Socialist goal of a tax of 20s. on every pound a man possesses, which I have heard seriously

suggested by Socialists or, to put it more plainly, the entire confiscation of property.

The whole trend of modern finance is in this direction of robbery, and unless it is overthrown root and branch, the nation will be ruined, as I have already stated. Our wealth has been most seriously undermined even now.

Of course, the State must be supported and taxes must be levied to maintain it. We have a very expensive machine to keep up, and it is none the worse for that. Personally, I prefer expensive things to cheap ones which are apt to be inferior. But if taxes are required, let them be raised on sound principles, then they will oppress no one and will bring in far more.

The clever financier can always find money, produce it and possess it, because his methods are so sound and so wisely based upon natural laws that the lucre breeds itself, and he always tends to have a surplus.

It is only the bad and wasteful manager who is always short of revenue.

“To him who hath shall be given, and to him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

No truer word ever proceeded from the lips of Wisdom.

It is a natural law, and will endure for all time.

It is as natural as the law of gravitation which causes water to flow down hill. The law of natural increase is as powerful as the law of gravitation, only we obey the one and ignore the other.

For instance, if I stroll round my garden and see my strawberry bed covered with ripe, luscious fruit, I do not fall into ecstasies at the sight of so much wealth. I take it for granted that my gardener has treated the plants rightly and that I am entitled to expect those same plants to provide me with fruit and with plenty of it. The strawberries have had a fair chance to do well, and *they have done so*.

It is the old, old law of natural increase which always works well when it has a chance. And when this law will not work, it is because there is something wrong. Something that must be laid at our own door!!

Now, for the last thirty years the Nation has not been sufficiently fortunate in finding Chancellors who could grow its strawberries. On the contrary, it has employed such incompetent gardeners that not only have they grown no fruit themselves, but to supply the deficiencies which had to be met, they have taken one and all to stealing other people's strawberries. If they were ordinary gardeners they would be clapped into prison, being Chancellors they receive £5,000 a year for wrong doing.

Again, let me quote another simple instance.

I take a walk round my farm yard, and I look in upon my hens ; if I find them clucking and clattering with satisfaction, and if I see plenty of nice brown eggs waiting to be gathered into my basket, I do not forthwith fall into panegyrics at the extraordinary charity of the hens in supplying me with eggs ! On the contrary, it is only when I go to my hen roost and find *no* eggs that I begin to make a row, and realise a Chancellor of the Exchequer has been there.

We have had, and still have Chancellors who rob hen roosts because they have no eggs of their own.

The one practice leads to the other. The man who steals our money is the man who has none of his own. The culprit who takes our coat is the fellow who does not possess one.

And this system of national pillage and pilfering is allowed to go on unnoticed, simply because it is done on such a vast scale. The millions which are required to maintain the country are so vast that few can grasp their significance, or realise what is being done. Everything is managed on such a lordly scale that we have accepted it without challenge, thinking it must be honestly come by. But our Chancellors are no better than the average mountebank who tries to hide his penury by a tremendous display of brass. We can scarcely blame the Chancellor, poor man, he has never studied finance or political economy, so how should he know. What he has studied is the game of Party Politics, which gives the biggest plum to the greatest talker. And we should blame *ourselves* that we are

idiotic enough to countenance the continuance of this party game.

In future, let the posts in the Cabinet be filled by the men best qualified to do the work. The best occupant for the place which the country can produce. Then we shall have a Chancellor who neither robs nor wastes our substance. For the same is true of cash as it is true of fruit or eggs.

- When there is none, I must blame myself, my laziness, my management, my methods. When the coffers are full and overflowing, I know the mischief has ceased, that methods are just and my finance is sound.

I implore you, wise taxpayers, to insist on the abolition of Death Duties and to devise another way to raise the necessary funds.

In my next letter I will tell you of wiser taxes which will bring you in all the money that is needed.

A tax that will bring in twenty to twenty-five millions for the fifteen to eighteen of Death Duties which I ask you to relinquish.

This letter of mine is a very long one, and my hand is cramped and aching, so that I can write no more. Also your patience is doubtless exhausted, so that my suggestion shall be sent to you in another epistle, if you really wish to receive one.

Assuring you, dear taxpayers, of my continued interest in your welfare,

I remain,

Yours sympathetically,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

SIXTH LETTER.

“THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.”

TO THE EX-CHANCELLORS OF THE
EXCHEQUER.

DEAR SIRS,—

You will doubtless be extremely surprised to hear that your powers of protecting the National wealth and taking charge of the public purse during your terms of office in the above capacity, are now called into question and open to some adverse criticism.

The people of Great Britain have for so long a period been soothed to sleep by your lullabies that it is, of course, most irksome that any such subject should present itself for discussion. However, in order that I may substantiate the statements given to my dear friends the Taxpayers of this country in my recent letter to them, I should feel very much obliged if you would kindly accord me an interview, wherein we might have an opportunity of having a few words together.

This may be all the more feasible inasmuch as the majority of your worthy selves are still creations of the present instead of being spectres of the past.

We must, however, begin with one of the latter number. The most prominent figure which has filled the Treasuryship for the last seventy years is that of the Rt. Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer was the right man in the right place, and in that sphere proved himself a genius. He protected the national wealth, kept the public purse with great wisdom and fostered the resources of the nation. He began as Chancellor in 1852, in times of storm and stress, and these continued until 1855, for the Crimean War was then in progress and this necessitated an Income Tax of 1s. 2d. and 1s. 4d. in the pound, but in 1857, when the war was over, it dropped at once to 7d., and in 1859 to 6d.

Could anything have been more wisely managed, more quietly surrendered, more honestly renounced ? He reduced the sixteenpenny income tax to sixpence within two years of the war ! What an instance of skill, wisdom and competency !

What a capable gardener !

Gladstone practically had control of England's financial affairs from 1852 to 1880 with a few intervals when the Conservatives were in power, but as he had laid down certain axioms they were more or less followed, even when he was not at the helm. A good example is worth all the powers of speech in the Cabinet ! During these 28 years he reduced the Income Tax (which should always be a war tax only) to 4d., 3d., and even 2d. in the pound. What followed this wise finance ? Enormous expansion, great growth, colossal development, astounding prosperity and universal welfare for these British Isles. Those who were alive at this time are never weary of talking about them, those who were as yet unborn read of them as of a brilliant fairy tale, and although many factors contributed to this glorious state of affairs, I maintain that sound finance was at the root of the matter, for as was mentioned before, finance *is, has been,* and always *must* be the centre of gravity upon which all else turns.

In 1880 Gladstone forsook this post, which was his by capacity, to become Prime Minister, a sphere where he buried his glories and became a factor for harm, whereupon this brilliant state of welfare vanished and mistakes began to occur.

Sir William Harcourt followed Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1886, and since then there has not been one good gardener, one treasurer who knew his business, or one Chancellor who was a competent financier.

Instead we have had men who may be divided into three divisions, and it is with the greatest of grief and reluctance that I feel they must be thus classed

FIRST CLASS.

Dangerous.

1. Sir William Harcourt.
2. Mr. Asquith.
3. Mr. D. Lloyd George.

1. Sir William Harcourt found himself short of supplies, due to careless expenditure in the early "nineties," so instead of thinking of some fair means which might reduce his expenses, or of some

new ways in which fresh avenues of revenue might be tapped, he inaugurated the Death Duties in 1894. By so doing he threw all financial truth to the winds, took money that belonged to individuals in the most aggressive form of direct taxation and began an era of using National and Individual Capital as Income. A method which is no better than highway robbery, and a maleficent practice which has unaccountably been allowed to remain in force by every succeeding Chancellor. Truly he was the most dangerous of all our public servants.

2. Mr. Asquith was also extremely alarming whilst at the Treasury. He bestowed Old Age Pensions on a non-contributory basis, thereby ruining the characters of his pensioners, thereby running the State unto a harmful undertaking it ought never to have incurred, and thereby proposing a vast expenditure without making the slightest preparation to meet it. On the contrary, in order to make matters extremely uncomfortable for his successor in particular, and the country at large, he threw away revenue which might have assisted in the extra expense and which was sound and healthy in

its workings (export duty of 2s. on coal and wheat registration fees).

Certainly Mr. Asquith behaved in a very Socialistic manner as Chancellor, and his tactics as Prime Minister have kept up the same traditions.

No. 3 is Mr. Lloyd George, who was responsible for the Budget of 1909. A famous document which revolutionised all existing methods, dealt blow upon blow to all energy, enterprise, and confidence, and was so very astoundingly dangerous, that even Great Britain, led by the invaluable House of Lords, awoke from its torpor and refused to sanction his counsels.

Let us now look at the next class of Chancellors who must—in spite of great regrets at being forced to do so, be called

SECOND CLASS.

Mischievous.

1. Rt. Hon. G. J. Goschen (Lord Goschen).
2. Rt. Hon. M. Hicks Beach (Lord St. Aldwyn).

However Sir Michael Hicks Beach came to be made Chancellor of the Exchequer is one of the

greatest conundrums of modern times. He had not even qualified for this important post by being a great orator !

Fate played him a particularly nasty trick in turning the Boer War loose upon him, whilst he was at the helm. The mistakes that followed were so extraordinarily disastrous that they only cost the country three hundred millions, all of which was levied in mistaken ways.

The day war was declared he should have raised the Income Tax to 2s. 6d. It is a war tax because it is so easily collected, so speedily realised, and dislocates no trade. Therefore, "on" with it in times of war, and "off" with it, when peace prevails.

It took Sir Michael about two years to feel there *was* a war, he then put on the coal tax, the sugar tax and the wheat tax, all taxes that ought to have been levied directly the war began.

The Boer War is very typical of Great Britain's state of chaos and want of order, intelligence, and direction. If we had had an adequate Army then, *i.e.*, Universal Military Service, there would have

been *no* war. If we had had a strong man leading either the country or the Army, it would at all events have been over in six months. But to return to Sir Michael.

He raised loans when there should have been taxes, he put on taxes just about the time when it ought to have been possible to take them off ! His ideas of issuing a loan were so moderate, so remote, so futile, that it is an actual fact that finding (or having been told) that it would be necessary to have one, he went to Messrs. Rothschild, which was a very wise proceeding, and informed them he wished to raise a loan of 5 millions. This was his first estimate of what a war carried on 5,000 miles from its base would probably cost. After a great deal of persuasion Messrs. Rothschild finally induced him to raise the sum to 30 millions, but treble this would have been better, for the war cost 300 millions. The discrepancy between 5 and 300 is about the proportion of Sir Michael's wisdom to his errors, as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He must, indeed, be termed an intensely amusing Chancellor, but we paid very dearly for our comic

entertainment. However, in other walks of life he is an eminently worthy personage, and we cannot lay the blame of his stupendous mistakes upon his own shoulders, let us rather agree that it is the fault of the public for allowing important posts to be filled by unskilled people.

In January of this year I had the pleasure of meeting at a dinner the man who may be Chancellor in the next Unionist Government. He has made 300 speeches on Tariff Reform, but even these labours do not necessarily imply capability for the post. After some interesting discussions between us, I ventured to express a hope that when Tariff Reform came it might enable him to reduce the Income Tax and moderate the Death Duties, to which sane and sensible demands he replied, "My dear Politician : You know as well as I do that the Death Duties have come to stay, and I do not believe that you or I will live to see the Income Tax under 1s. at any time of our lives."

Here, then, are the lack of aims, the content with existing methods, and the want of originality which will take us yet further down the hill of our financial

ruin. I am a strong Unionist, but to make such a man Chancellor of the Exchequer will be a national calamity of the first magnitude, and it was only on hearing his verdict, which is full of ominous disaster and slow murder for the Empire that I love, that I determined to post my letter to the eight gentlemen who have been such dismal failures, when in charge of the public purse and the national wealth. It is the action of despair, but it is imperative to make people think when it is evident that statesmen refuse to do so. If any wise man can be stirred into action by my halting words the country will reap the benefit.

We now turn to No. 2, Lord Goschen. (I hear a chorus of voices saying what, Goschen? Our one good Chancellor, the one gardener who tried to grow crops, the one financier who really did meddle with finance !).

Alas, yes, your revered Goschen. The one Chancellor who thought he understood finance, and who by his training should have done so, the one gardener who grew something that was superfluous, the one financier who tampered with our National Security,

Consols, in such manner that it has been prejudicial to our prestige and mischievous to our financial system ever since.

He did not see, what any man of intuition should have seen, that instead of people being content that money should yield less interest as time progressed it would be required, for many new but sound reasons, to yield rather more. He failed to perceive what has since been proved true, that it is better from all points of view to have Consols standing at par and pay 3% at that figure, than to have them fluctuating around 83, when they pay precisely the same thing at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$.

Appearances are always invaluable and carry more weight in this every-day world than they should do. It might be estimated that a good appearance in man, woman or child, in mansion, house or cottage, in office, stores or shop, or, indeed, in any other condition is worth about 30% of the sum total. It is unquestionably better for our National Security to stand round about 100, and as, of course, they cannot do this whilst paying $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ I, for one, should consider it advisable to restore them

to their former basis and rectify the mistake which Goschen perpetrated out of his incomplete knowledge.

Why should our investors forego the ever useful half-sovereign due to them, by purchasing our Consols when they can find the same security with slightly more interest in the 3% of Germany and Belgium or the $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ of Russia and Norway, etc., etc., not to mention the tempting rate of $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ interest paid by Japan, etc., etc. Future events, and they are one of the best criterions, have indeed shown us the error of Goschen's policy.

We now come to the remaining division of the Chancellors of the Exchequer of the last thirty years.

THIRD CLASS.

Incompetent.

1. Lord R. Churchill.
2. Mr. Ritchie.
3. Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

These three gentlemen were Chancellors for so short a period that they had not much scope for action, but inasmuch as they made no substantial

reform and continued the mistaken policy of spending Capital as Income, they showed lack of knowledge of the most elementary rules of Finance, and thereby proved themselves incompetent and weak ! Whether any one of them could do better when the whole of our fiscal system was changed remains to be seen. But it surely must be advisable to appoint a man as Chancellor who has made a careful study of Economics and Finance, and if possible one who has had ten years training in commerce, business, or that much reviled place, “ the City ” !

For the last thirty years the people of this realm have not been able to obtain the services of any competent man who was *suited to the post* ! Some of them have been decidedly able men in their other walks of life and have made many successes elsewhere, but no politician can be a good Chancellor of the Exchequer because he happens to be the best speaker on public platforms or in the House of Commons, or because he is the man on that side who deserves the biggest plum that office can bestow, and is accordingly placed at the Treasury. For here

he obtains a nice round sum of £5,000 a year for incompetency. This same sum is the most expensive recompense that England gives to any one, for it costs her many millions in wealth and cash sterling, yearly. After some consideration I think it would be wise for our poor ill-used country to give a very moderate salary to its Chancellor, say £2,000, because then it would not be such a tempting plum to unsuitable candidates and would not be so likely to be handed over to party politicians and "gasbags."

Only the man who loves, breathes and lives in finance would be ready to accept so much work for so little pay, and in this manner we might really secure the services of the right person. To him the delight of handling figures, the joy of marshalling millions, and the pleasure of contriving means for producing national increase throughout all the highways and byeways of our fiscal system, would be so great that he would feel amply rewarded with a pittance and would probably be ready to do it for nothing if he could afford to do so. And of course the right man will be a wealthy one, for he must

have been successful in private life before he can be useful for the public purse. Your true Chancellor is a born genius at figures and cannot be kept away from them.

I know several who would be splendid in this difficult post, but they are all men who have special aptitude for figures and who amount to geniuses in their own careers.

Is it too much to ask that an honest genius of this sort may be found to deal with our financial affairs at the next Unionist Government? Never will there be such a golden opportunity for rectifying mistakes, bringing order out of chaos, creating sufficient Income to supply all our national requirements, renouncing the Death Duties, which never for one moment should have been levied, reducing the Income Tax to 6d. at most and 3d. would be better, and generally returning to the sound finance which prevailed up to 1880 last century, but which has been totally abandoned the last thirty years. Tariff Reform will help us enormously and make, when it comes, it possible to give Fiscal Reform a fair trial. Both are important, but the latter is a

more lasting reform and includes the former. Therefore, let us urge it upon all and sundry of our future Chancellors, for they surely must wish to deserve a better record than it has been found possible to give the eight honourable gentlemen who have been Chancellors of the Exchequer since 1880, and to whom I would subscribe myself,

Your despairing critic,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

SEVENTH LETTER.

FORWARD.

TO THE GREATEST PATRIOT.

MY DEAREST PATRIOT,—

It is with much sorrow in my heart that I express my sympathy with the ill-health which keeps you from actively joining in the great crisis which is at hand, the convalescence which detains you in the shelter of your home, thinking and directing instead of acting—but thinking and directing still with the breath of vigorous energy within your over-strained body.

If only we could congratulate you on being able to stand up to the fight in your accustomed manner of old, for you were the best fighter in any of our ranks, albeit, you always hit from the shoulder, fair and square, with no underhand cuts or mean thrusts behind an opponent's back ; and, in these dark days of the present time, darker than any that have been before us for seventy years, how sorely, how urgently, how imperatively our country needs a leader and a great fighter, many of us, and both you and I know. A great man, a fighter, a leader.

Where is he ?

Most assuredly you have done your fair share of work, and helped many others to do their best too, in the short seventy-three years which have been your span of life. You worked unintermittingly and increasingly for eight or nine years on end. Scorning to take a holiday, refusing to rest, and wearing your health out with your energy, although the spirit was unvanquished still.

I suppose that you and your eye-glass and the orchid frequently worn in your buttonhole have provided more good-humoured jokes in *Punch* and the comic papers than any other personality, save, perhaps, Gladstone and his collars.

But beneath the orchid beat a heart which for courage, zeal, and sympathy could not be surpassed, and behind the much derided monocle was an eye that not only perceived what lay in front of it, far better than many another's pair of eyes, but an organ, nourished by an intuitive brain power, which could read the writing on the wall for future years to come.

And this is one of the secrets of a great leader.

He must not only lead for to-day or for to-morrow, he must be able to look ahead for several decades in front of him. A prescience of the needs, of the ideals and of the requirements of future generations, and particularly the one that is growing up around him must invariably be his. Only a man who is young at heart, simple in his greatness, and wise in his experience can be so thoroughly in touch with the youth of his country that he anticipates their wishes, realizes their ideals, and leads the way to the fulfilment thereof: "Nothing is so simple as greatness, indeed, to be simple is to be great." But although you were depicted in the comic papers with your well-known accessories, if we asked you to step out of the House of Commons on to the pavement outside to meet your friend "the man in the street" (as we requested Mr. Balfour to do) the result would always have been absolutely different. This important personage would at all times have hailed you with "That's our Joe, the man we love; he's the chap for us. Here's three cheers for Joe."

The man in the street and the men throughout the country knew and felt that you were their best friend, and therefore trusted you more than they trusted themselves or even their own boon comrades !

It is my firm conviction, after getting at the views of working men, that at heart they infinitely prefer to be represented and to be lead by a gentleman whom they can respect and admire, but if for any selfish reason the gentleman they trust and honour will not stand for the constituency he is invited to represent, in which he has lived or worked and is well-known, then rather than have a stranger whom they do not know or care about, foisted upon them, they will select one of their own companions and return a labour member. One of the main reasons that so many labour members were elected for the last Parliament of 1906 is on account of the lamentable fact that some of the best British citizens shirk their duty in representing the constituency which claims them, and which by right should be theirs in Parliament as it is theirs in appreciation and affection. I know at least a dozen constituencies where, if the beloved candidate of

that ilk had consented to stand, when he was ardently desired to do so, the seat would have been in different hands. In default of the chosen candidate who would not stand, it was given over to a labour member of the opposite party.

But to return to you, our greatest patriot. Let us take a leaf out of your book. You went into the family business, and so well did you work at it that by the time you were forty you had made, not only enough money for your own wants, but sufficient to provide for all your sisters and brothers.

Even more important than gaining "where-withal" for the needs of your family was the practical training which you there received. For a business training teaches anyone to seize the opportunity when it occurs, to control finance soundly, and to lead and manage numbers of working people. After making your business a great success, you devoted your time and energies to improving your town of Birmingham. You laboured upon the Town Council for Municipal Reform, and you were Mayor of Birmingham for three successive years. All very advisable for the towns and towns-

people of Great Britain and instructive to yourself. Being so universally popular, you were, as a natural consequence, requested to stand for one of the constituencies of Birmingham.

You are a prophet in your own country, and do not need to go and find some corner where your life is unknown and you yourself a stranger in order to pass muster as member. The subsequent history of your life we all know. And if anyone cares to see what happens where there is a real leader, look at the little kingdom which "our Joe" has carved out for himself in the Midlands.

Now let us return to you, dear Patriot, when you entered the Cabinet.

You are one of the few men who, having the pick of all the plums of office, were disinterested and sagacious to the point of selecting the post best suited to your capabilities, where you could work to the greatest advantage for your country. The years spent at the Board of Trade led you to perceive that all was not well with our Tariff.

In the next Ministry when your side came in, you were offered any post you liked, and to everybody's

astonishment you chose voluntarily the Secretaryship of the Colonial Office, at that time an obscure and ignored position.

Your foresight, your prescience, and your capable judgment for the future enabled you to see that eventually we must stand together shoulder to shoulder with our brethren beyond the seas as one vast British Empire, or dwindle away into something less than Great Britain, a little tiny island that cannot feed, clothe, or nourish itself.

Our best men are now alive to the fact that the whole British Empire must be indissolubly bound together by trade preferences, mutual assistance and Imperial Federation. The populace are only dimly beginning to see what you perceived twenty years ago !

Twice you sacrificed office altogether for patriotism in a spirit of honest conviction. Of course, this is nothing more than honest, upright behaviour, but it is so rare, so unusual, so unaccustomed in a politician that one is tempted to remark, "How honest, noble, and how grand ! " Most politicians sacrifice their opinions to their tenure of office.

Your convictions, which at the time appeared to be premature, have since led the way to better methods, and the country has slowly followed, as, indeed, it invariably does follow, the great man when he is in the right, but sometimes so slowly that the best opportunity is lost.

It is delightful to feel that after many years of uphill fighting and arduous work, you will one day see the results of your labours culminate in Tariff Reform, which must come sooner or later.

It will help to save the Empire from destruction and give it a new lease of vigorous life, but it is not enough by itself : more remains to be done. The other field of your energies, the Colonies, have so greatly grown, and have so enormously advanced that they are going to be incorporated with the British Empire, Colonies no longer, but sons and daughters who are the best support of their mother country, of the Great Britain, where the sun never sets and to which one-fifth of the globe belongs.

“ What does he know of England
Who only England knows ? ”

Nothing, less than nothing, for what he knows is inadequate, and therefore misleading.

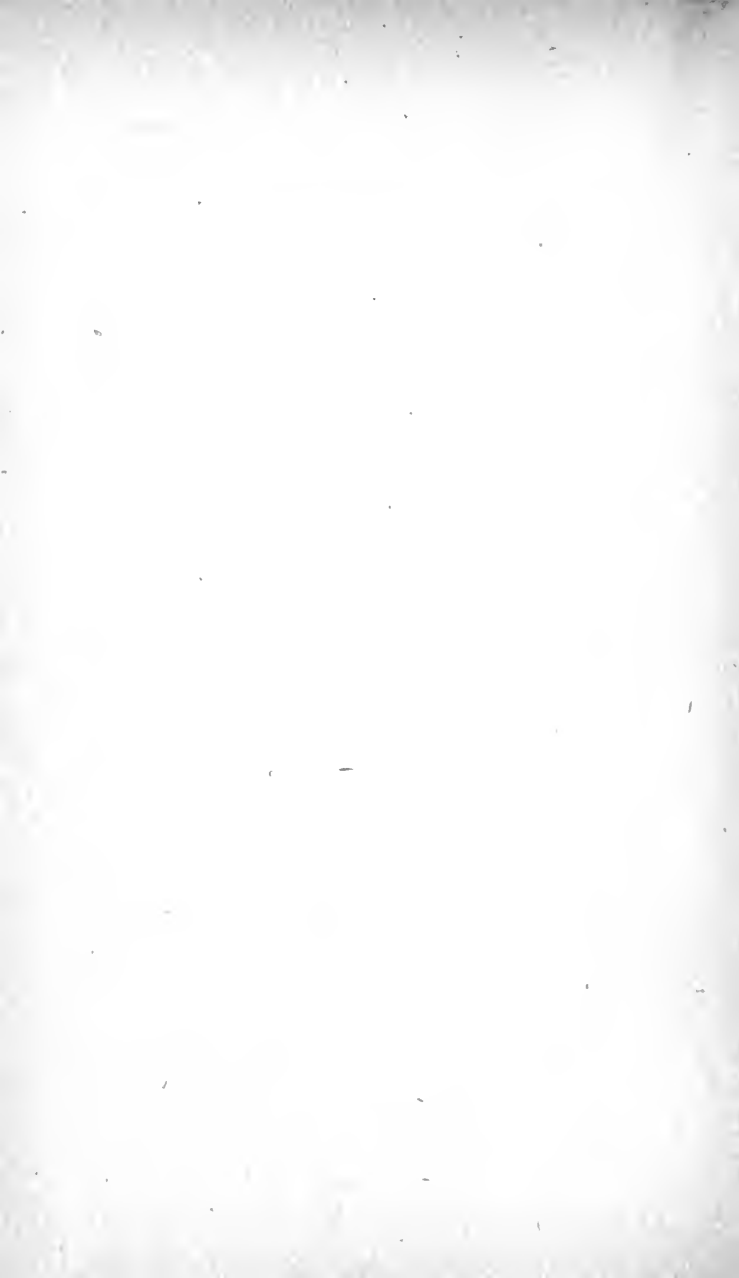
Our greatest Patriot realized how little we knew, and showed us the way to improved knowledge.

Therefore, dear Patriot, with the deepest respect and the most affectionate admiration, I am,

Your humble friend,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

EIGHTH LETTER.



TO THE UNIONISTS.

MY DEAR UNIONISTS,—

You are the only party I care to address at the present moment, for the remainder of my compatriots have so grievously disappointed me that I do not feel inclined to send them any message that will be to their liking.

They have shown that they do not understand the gravity of the issues before them, that they do not distinguish honest men from the tricksters who are bent on inculcating a system of robbery under the cloak of National Finance, and it is seen that once it is rendered possible to obtain an Old Age Pension for doing nothing, at the cost of ruining your own character, the State and your country, the doctrine is more attractive to our “ degenerates ” than a policy of independence, grit and prudence.

It was this same system of giving doles to the populace of Athens and Rome which brought both these great powers to a bad end.

We, the Unionists, have been beaten in the recent election as far as an actual majority of seats are concerned, but we have done such good work that the previous huge majority on the Ministerial side is now gone, and any power which remains to them is practically dependent on the Irish vote. This is a great deal to have accomplished, but it is not enough.

It is incumbent upon us to make serious preparations for the future fight which will be at hand before long. And in order that we may be better prepared for the coming fray, let us make a diagnosis of the causes that led to our recent lack of success.

We may then begin at once to make effective preparations for the future.

1st Cause.—Lack of a leader who can lead. Mr. Balfour spoke so half-heartedly, so unconvincingly, so tediously, that he helped his opponents. In politics he has absolutely no “drive”; this is presumably kept for his golf. I verily believe that

if Joseph Chamberlain had been able to make speeches in Lancashire and Yorkshire before the elections, Tariff Reform would have carried the day. The country will not follow an unpopular man.

2nd Cause.—The defective Conservative party organization. It is in a deplorable state. Let some strong men, or body, like the Tariff Reform League, go over the country bit by bit, sweeping out the incompetent agents of the Conservative Organization, placing new brooms in their places. This is the season for spring cleaning, and the Conservative Organization requires it more than any house you could find. For I have heard of fools, knaves, even drunkards, acting as our agents, and of Unionists who were anxious to vote, discovering at the eleventh hour that they were not even on the register ! This tells a twofold story.

An incompetent agent who does not “look up” his voters, and a more than futile Unionist who did not take steps and have his name registered himself. The loss of so many London seats was due to defective organization.

3rd Cause.—The great middle class of England must arise and begin to act. Turn out bad agents, replace them by yourselves. Instead of gloating over your newspaper, chuck it aside and help to make “the news” yourself. It will be all the more interesting for being home manufactured.

Important works cannot be carried on without machinery of the best and most improved type. Our machinery is out of date and must be replaced by better dynamos; our best citizens are leaderless, and therefore drifting, but it is all the more incumbent upon them, one and all, to do their best to aid in the work that has to be done, for there is an immense amount to be taken in hand. You can no longer afford to sit still and “hope” matters will go better, you must be up and doing yourself.

I know that our very keenest Unionists have worked themselves to exhaustion in the great desire for improvement, and have earned everybody’s gratitude, for they have worked splendidly. But the reason they have had to work too hard and yet have their efforts uncrowned by success, is that for one that worked ten have not worked at all. They

have only read the newspapers ! In the critical state of affairs which prevail, this arduous task is totally insufficient. Where there has been real labour done by Tariff Reformers, it has brought its own reward.

“ If little labour, little are our gains,
Man’s fortunes are according to his pains.”

And it is highly instructive and interesting to study the record of the voting which has just been registered. In places where the vote was of educated, instructed and thoughtful people, there influence was given in favour of Tariff Reform. Therefore the brains and intelligence of the country are largely upon our side.

Again, in towns or neighbourhoods where some one strong man had personally devoted his time, his energies and his influence to enlightening the masses and explaining matters clearly to them, so that they really had a grasp of the question at stake, the working men voted for the Unionists and Tariff Reform. Such a place is Sunderland, where Mr. Samuel Storey has rescued the inhabitants from the doctrines of ignorance and so-called Free Trade.

His influence has won both seats there, and this in the heart of the Radical camp !

There have been many such places, very much further south. I may take West Bromwich and Coventry as an instance, where citizens of the best type have thrown themselves ardently into the contest with extremely satisfactory results. West Bromwich has become converted, and so has Coventry, and has returned Unionists. There are many places of this description, but more remain to be conquered.

The change has always happened in districts where there has been competent training and good spade work by the intelligent brains of the country, for the benefit of their fellow men, and also in the counties, where they realise that the 1909 Budget would mean starvation to them. We are marching forward, but slowly, too slowly by half. It will be better to win the next race in a canter, and to this end, besides the three reforms advocated above, I would humbly suggest two others.

4th Cause.—That a Conference or Conferences be held between the Tariff Reform League influential

leaders, such as Mr. Bonar Law, Prof. Hewins, etc., etc., and the leaders of the various Trade Unions. If these prominent men can be convinced of the soundness of our arguments they will render us great assistance, and efforts must be made in this direction, for we want them for allies.

5th Cause.—That Tariff Reform, which bears at present somewhat of a vague formless shape, be brought down from the clouds, where it has dwelt for seven long years, to walk upon this little piece of earth called the British Isles, where it is badly needed, and that practical proposals be advanced. When it can be shown the working man and woman that the fivepenny tax on a lb. of tea which is extorted from them now will be taken off, and that his cup of tea will cost him one-third less in price than at present ; when he knows that his tobacco shall pay a hundred per cent. duty instead of five hundred per cent. tax, as it does at present, and that therefore his pipe can be five times as frequent as it now is for the same money spent on it ; when he realises that the sugar and jam his children need and rejoice in will be substantially cheaper, seeing

that the three millions now raised from the source of sugar will be relinquished—then he will begin to think in the right way. With tea, sugar, tobacco (and many other things), but primarily these three important items, thirty per cent. cheaper and more readily within his reach, the working man may cease talking so much about his loaf which he never appreciates, and which is woefully wasted at all times. Even the much discussed loaf cannot become nearly as expensive under Tariff Reform as it has recently become under the Socialistic Government of the last four years, for food has become fifteen per cent. dearer since the Radicals came in. The bogey of dear food must be answered and conquered. We, the Unionists, have appealed to the brains, the intelligence, the heads of the community. When this way will work it is doubtless a good way, but when other people are appealing to the hearts and to the pockets of the public with the “dear food cry,” it behoves us, the Tariff Reformers, to do likewise. We have really far more to bestow in all directions than our rivals. Why keep all the benefits in the background, as has been hitherto done. Some

men are ruled by their heads, more men are touched through their hearts, but I have yet to meet the man who cannot be approached through his pocket ! *Verbum Sap.* And it is the appeal to pockets, to wit, Old Age Pensions, which has returned the Socialists to a power that has been unworthily obtained and secured under false pretences.

If properly expounded, Tariff Reform, and the policy of Unionists for Imperial welfare, should appeal to the brains, hearts and pockets of the Nation, for it would amalgamate all three into one healthy, vital whole.

And here let me draw attention to the very obvious fact that we, the Unionists, the party in the United Kingdom which is against schemes of disruption, dismembership, and upheaval, against rank Socialism, pauperism, and confiscation, and all the tenets of the present Socialistic ministry ; we, the Unionists, stand for all that the Anglo-Saxon race has hitherto held dear and for which it has spent its blood in upholding ; we, that party which wishes Great Britain to rise above these temporary squabbles and misfortunes and to try

and fulfil her destiny as the greatest world-power humanity has yet seen—we are fighting not only for Tariff Reform, which is a necessity, we are struggling over and beyond this requirement for far greater necessities.

We are fighting for national sustenance, national existence, and Imperial continuance, as a Nation, as a Power, as an Empire. We shall be swept away and disappear unless we put forth every endeavour to stem the flowing tide of Socialism, and unless we are capable of finding Ministers who will build stronger bulwarks to support our foundations than has hitherto been attempted.

We must maintain the supremacy of the seas.

We must weld together commercially and *morally* the vast Empire of English-speaking dominions into a great corporate federation.

This would be strong enough to withstand attack from outside and valiant enough to subdue internal strife of a dangerous character from within.

If the United Kingdom is to continue to hold up its head against decay, we, the Unionists, must

build new foundations as we have not built in the last thirty years.

While we are waiting to be returned to power by the electors of Great Britain, let us use the intermediate months profitably in repairing our foundations, and drawing up better schemes of reforms.

(1) A change in our Tariff is essential.

(2) A radical improvement in our Financial System is every whit as imperative.

(3) A Prime Minister who can lead.

(4) A Royal Commission to consider how we can best form a system of universal military training towards the formation of a National Army, are some of the most urgent forms of building preparations which the Unionists should undertake. National existence will then be placed upon a much surer footing than it is at present, and Great Britain will receive a new lease of life from her Unionists.

“Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way,
But to act that each to-morrow
Finds us further than to-day.”

Our labours, dear Unionists, have been striking, but not complete. That you may take it unto yourselves to effect an improvement, is the great hope of,

Yours respectfully,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

NINTH LETTER.

“A MERRY HEART GOES ALL THE WAY.”

Shakespeare.

TO THE BRITISH SPORTSMAN.

DEAR SPORTSMAN,—

As far as my acquaintance with you is concerned, I have the highest possible opinion of your qualities, and of your individuality, whether you hunt, shoot, fish, race, course, yacht, row or play polo, golf, cricket, hockey or football. Many of you I have personally entertained under my roof with the greatest of pleasure, and many more I have met in daily life.

I think perhaps that both the Englishman and the Englishwoman may be seen to their best advantage in the country, in the home that they love and where they are devoting themselves to the sport that they affect.

Yet much as I sympathise with and admire you, British Sportsman, honesty compels me to express my conviction that Sport in the British Isles is, if anything, carried to excess, and candour might insist that amongst many good qualities it inculcates,

there is one inferior characteristic, namely, selfishness, which it is also apt to develop.

Therefore I am now going to propose, with your consent, a slight reform to moderate the excess and to turn the selfishness to good account, if indeed there be any such. The British Sportsman as I know him will be among the first to aid and abet my proposals. He is a person who invariably "plays the game," if he is worthy of the title, so that I am going to ask him to come to the assistance of the State and to play his game to the advantage of his country, and the welfare of his Empire and consequently for the health and wealth of himself.

I see him looking at me and saying, "You know, my friend, I'm not the sort to go into the House, and I don't care to sit on committees and that sort of thing, so what do you wish me to do!" To which I reply :

"You are a very fortunate person. You have all you need for necessities and besides this you have a margin, a narrow, or more often a very wide one, which enables you to have a great deal of enjoyment in your life from following your favourite pursuits.

You are a very good specimen of humanity, but if you err, you do so by considering your own individual pleasure as rather more important than nationally or economically it proves to be, so that I ask you to contribute something to the Chancellor of the Exchequer out of your enjoyment and from that margin or excess of income which you are able to devote to pure pleasure. This I know you will agree to do, for you are always just and honourable, and by so doing you will make it possible to abolish the iniquitous Death Duties, which take away your estate from your family, make it very hard for them when you are gone, scatter your works of art and pictures and prevent your country from increasing her wealth and substance."

I propose that you should keep accounts of the expenses that have been incurred under the heads of your shooting, fishing, hunting, racing, golfing, yachting, cricket, football, polo, hockey and golf and that you should contribute 10% of the sum total to the State in the form of the Sports tax.

I never met the Sportsman yet who could not tell me what his Sport cost him a year. As a rule I

suffer, in silence, from having too much information given me upon this point, for you are apt to forget, dear Sportsman, that your Sport interests you rather more than it does anyone else. However, I know by personal experience that you nearly all keep a record of your expenditures under this head, and those of you who have not already done so, can in future adopt more methodical methods ; the tax will be very easy of collection, for it can be paid once a year in January on the Inland Revenue form.

I have heard it suggested frequently by shooting sportsmen that it would be a good thing to tax the cartridges, instead of the gun as is now done by the gun license, the race horses, instead of the dog-cart, and your suggestions were sensible. But if we tax separately each accessory of Sport it would entail far more irritation, labour and difficulty of collection, more inquisition, and more superintendence, than my present scheme. This is to put you, the fine flower of British Sportsmen, upon your honour to "play the game" and to leave you to contribute through the Inland Revenue papers a sum which is 10% of that which you have spent in pleasurable

sport or games throughout the year for the assistance of the Exchequer, and I should suggest taking off the wheel tax on carriages, which must be obsolete very soon, and substituting 30s. a head on horses when kept for pleasure, the motor tax can remain as at present, ditto the dog tax and male servant tax.

Here let us observe that a bad tax based on false economy, presses heavily on those that pay it and taxes people and their property *out* of existence, but that a wise tax protects, increases and nourishes the article which is taxed. This small tax of 7s. 6d. per dog above mentioned is just and fair, for it is optional. No man need pay this if he objects to it, but if he loves his dog, he willingly agrees to it. Does a tax on dogs exterminate the bovine tribe? On the contrary, dogs are more valued, better nourished and more appreciated than cats, who do not pay a tax.

Their dignity, their comfort, and their welfare are all aided by the tax.

Let us look at another instance. Motor cars are taxed fairly heavily. Quite justly so. Horses are not taxed at all. The motor cars are used by

hundreds and thousands, the horses diminish in the same ratio, and when our next war comes and we need them, we shall have none. With our present methods the horse will soon be rare. But he is such a valuable animal, such a joy to behold, and so useful in war that we had better shelter and encourage him by placing a tax upon his noble head. Let us put a 30s. a head on all racers, hunters, polo ponies, riding, hack and carriage horses, anything kept for pleasure. Business horses, of course, to be exempt. I believe we should see horses increase in value and numbers.

It is computed that we of the British Isles spend annually £50,000,000 in sport, and this is below rather than above the actuality, so that 10% on individual expense gives £5,000,000 to the Exchequer. This £50,000,000, my friends, is a nice little sum which our countrymen have in their pockets as pocket money to spend on pure pleasure and to give themselves enjoyment; let us see if the National Exchequer cannot become a participator to a very small degree in this vast amount of cash spent as pocket money to give themselves amusement, for I am absolutely convinced from what I know of that

worthy soul, the British Sportsman, that he would most willingly contribute a little of his *Income*, disbursed for these ends, towards the maintenance of the State. And if we make his contribution optional, and taken from *Income*, it will at once be a wise, just and lucrative tax ; moreover, it will bring in as much as do the Death Duties, and instead of gradually but certainly bringing ruin upon our country, you will see the strange sight of our people, our leisured classes, who really can afford to pay, revelling in taxation, and no one will be *one penny the worse*, whereas the Exchequer will be a good many million of pennies to the good. Firstly, then, as mentioned before in these pages, I would begin by putting a tax of 30s. on all horses used for pleasure, sport or pastimes. All racing studs, hunters, polo ponies, carriage horses, riding hacks, and the like would pay a 30s. a head poll tax and their value would be enhanced, you will find, by so doing.

Then let us turn to our major sport, our National sport, and our much-beloved sport, that of the Turf. We all enjoy a good race, we all delight to see fine

horses, we all like to go to our meetings where we meet King, Court, and Society. It is more than sound to ask racing to contribute to the State Exchequer, for it is a pleasure, a luxury, and an enjoyment, and it would fall on those who have money to spend and not on the poor or destitute. I propose, then, that we take a leaf out of the book of our neighbours in France and that we ask all those who go to a race and make a bet to yield 10% of their winnings to the State. They have been lucky, they have touched unexpected gold, they will cheerfully consent to contribute 10% to the Chancellor. Those who lose do not pay, but those who win, either peer or commoner, pay 10% based exactly on the system which works so well in France, namely, the "Pari-Mutuel," and which is found to render the odds and the betting more just, more fair, more equal than they are here. In other words, this tax would be absolutely optional, and would improve racing and the odds of betting. For in France the odds are absolutely just, and at present over here the odds are never quite fair. This small tax of 10% on all betting appertaining to horseracing

will come out of Income, an Income that is extremely easily won, and it will bring you in from £15 to £20 million a year, will elevate the tone of the racecourse, and abolish those objectionable people called "bookies," and will enable you to abolish the Death Duties, which are stolen from Capital and impoverish the Nation. 10% on all betting *apropos* of racing brings in £6,000,000 sterling in France. Here it is somewhat difficult to say how much it would bring in, but as racing is an obsession in England, I should judge that £20,000,000 might be reached.

Here, then, I propose an additional income to the State of 25 million pounds, £20,000,000 from betting on racing and £5,000,000 from actual sports. All this would be taken from the margin that is spent on pleasure, and would hurt no one, it would come from Income, from spare Income even, and is, therefore, sound, healthy, and just. I appeal to the noble specimens of British Sportsmen to assist their country by giving 10% of their money spent on pleasure to the Exchequer on the distinct understanding that the Death Duties are abolished, at

the same time. The wealth of the country will be much saved by this change.

I remain, dear Sportsmen,

Your sincere friend,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

TENTH LETTER.

“THERE IS NOTHING USELESS TO
MEN OF SENSE, CLEVER PEOPLE
TURN EVERYTHING TO ACCOUNT.”

TO EVERY TAXPAYER.

LONDON,
1910.

DEAR TAXPAYERS,—

In my last letter to you I gave you the unexpected news that our country, Great Britain, was face to face with imminent peril. That of financial bankruptcy and gradual national decay. I also informed you, doubtless much to your astonishment, that our Fiscal System admits what is in reality robbery, and that you were obliged to pay taxes which impoverished yourselves and your country.

It will naturally occur to all of you, that it would be profitable at the present juncture to devote myself to suggesting better methods which will meet the difficulties in an adequate manner, and this I shall endeavour to accomplish with the hope of gaining your approbation and your approval.

There is room for so much improvement that it would daunt a less courageous heart to make a beginning. However, let us look around and go slowly, “*Chi va piano, va sano, chi va sano, va lontano.*”

Roughly speaking, it may be laid down that taxation, to be wise, just and expedient, and to bring in the greatest yield possible, should be :—

1. Taken from Income, *never* from Capital.
2. Should be indirect when possible. If direct it tends to become inquisitorial and injurious.
3. Should be optional when feasible. That is based on luxuries that are not essential.

If here these three axioms are followed the greatest yield will be obtained with the minimum amount of friction or oppression.

Taxation on this correct basis will aid and encourage prosperity and will increase wealth, instead of curtailing the one and banishing the other from the country, to our lasting detriment.

If we glance at our present taxes, Excise comes first, the duties on beer, wines and spirits, etc. These taxes are taken from income, are indirect and are optional, as no one need partake of these liquors unless they choose to enjoy the luxury of so doing. Therefore in theory these taxes are eminently sound and just, although at present in practice they are so

severe that they tend to limit and diminish the yield of the tax. They press with such severity upon consumers that people forego their liquor and imbibe something else. This is the usual result of over-taxation, therefore I should like to see the Excise taxes modified to the amount that was in force some years ago.

Now we come to Customs, these as they now stand are most unjust to our working classes, and have been taken chiefly from articles which have become necessities, such as tea and sugar, even if our forebears partook of other fare. Tariff Reform will, when it comes, presumably alter these Customs very greatly, and many of the present evils will be remedied. The tax on tea should, of course, be taken off when such tea comes from India, Ceylon, or our other dependencies, and might pay one-third of its present burden when from China and foreign countries. It is a tax that weighs very heavily on the working classes. They now procure bad tea because of its expense, instead of good tea which they would be able to afford if the 5d. tax per pound were removed. Sugar also comes from our

dependencies, is also a necessity for growing children and youthful persons, and therefore should be allowed to come in free. A tax could be placed on beet sugar manufactured by foreign countries to encourage home manufacture of this article if we need it.

To balance the £3,000,000 which will be surrendered by taking off the tax on sugar, I would suggest returning to the export duty of 2s. a ton on coal leaving England. This same tax worked very beneficially for a few years and was recklessly thrown away by Mr. Asquith. It was a wise tax in two ways. It reduced the price of coal for home consumption, for the inhabitants of these Islands, and it asked the foreigners to pay a small contribution to our Exchequer if they wished to avail themselves of our valuable mineral.

To help to compensate for the duty which should come off tea, I should wish to see another tax of the same character instituted, namely, a 25% export duty on all works of art which leave these shores to gladden the eyes of the foreigner and to bring sorrow unto our own. The tax would be on pictures,

statues, china, furniture, tapestries, water-colour drawings, prints, engravings, etchings, etc., etc.

It is estimated by competent authorities that America (now released from her own import duty on objets d'art) will import about £8,000,000 worth of these treasures yearly, as long as any such remain in Europe. In this way an export duty of 25% on all works of art more than thirty years old, would bring us in a very useful sum and safeguard our interests in this direction. The works of Art America purchases are chiefly from France and the United Kingdom. Seeing that the outflow of our treasures was stupendous in 1909, it is time either to protect our valuables by purchasing them ourselves, or since we are, unfortunately, too much impoverished to do this on any large scale, to ask the richer foreigner, chiefly American (who does not suffer from Death Duties or pay Income Tax) to make a small contribution to assist our Exchequer if he robs us of our national capital and our beautiful art treasures.

It would indeed be good news to hear that this tax could be put on in the next Budget.

We now turn to the Death Duties, and in another letter to my friend, the British Sportsman, I have asked him to come to our rescue here and accord the State one-tenth of his winnings whilst betting on racing, etc. He makes the money so easily, so unexpectedly, and so fortunately, that he will be generous enough to do this for the great welfare of England. But only after the death duties have been abolished, as he cannot afford both; but the tax I suggest would be taken from income, and the Death Duties are robbing capital, so there can be no doubt in the mind of any sane person which is the wiser tax to levy.

We must now turn to the Income tax, which is regarded as our chief tax.

“I believe that notwithstanding all that Chancellors of the Exchequer may say with regard to the advantages of the income tax, it is as hateful as ever it has been to the people, and I believe it to be hateful because it is unjust.” So spake John Bright in 1859 in the House of Commons, before the public were reconciled to robbery masquerading as financial law, and before Britons allowed their affairs to be

placed in incompetent hands and before we became slaves to injustice.

An income tax in time of war is essential, but in times of peace it should be a merely nominal tax, never standing at more than sixpence in the pound, and threepence would be better.

For the last thirty years, gentlemen, we who are indeed a law-abiding race have been too quiescent, too passive, too lethargic, upon this matter of paying a monstrously high income tax, whether through ignorance, mistaken conscientiousness, or absolute indifference it would be difficult to say.

But this state of affairs must be changed. The limit has been reached. Income tax already stands at 1s. 2d. in the £, and will probably go higher this spring to provide for Old Age Pensions. This would be nothing short of taking pennies out of one man's pocket, the man who is careful, thrifty and self-denying, and presenting them to the other fellow, who has none of these characteristics. Our unjust taxation has become such a burden upon us that no breath is left in our lungs with which to shout against such iniquity.

Why not have a taxation that is fair, just, and based on sound principles ?

If this were enacted, we should all revel in taxation.

Yes ; I use the word advisedly : *Revel*. Nothing is so exhilarating as the sensation that one is creating wealth, wealth for the country, wealth for the family, and wealth for oneself in order that one may be a power for good in the land.

Sound finance acts and re-acts with as much importance in private households, public businesses or national affairs as healthy blood acts in our physical bodies, and the results are the same, *i.e.*, a supreme feeling of health, energy and welfare. The income tax must be reduced before we can be even in a moderate state of health, and, personally, I should like to see a good Tariff put on in its stead.

There are high walls of Protection standing against us in which ever direction we send our manufactures abroad, and if we only put on a 10% Tariff we shall have no margin with which to effect

negotiations with our neighbours. Surely it would be wiser to start with 20% on all wholly manufactured articles, 10% on partially manufactured articles, and 5% on food where we can provide it ourselves, such as eggs, butter, apples, pears, vegetables; but fruit which we cannot grow, such as oranges, bananas, pineapples, etc., food which we cannot produce, might come in free.

When Tariff Reform comes it will be necessary to completely change our customs, but, fortunately, we possess two wise authorities in Mr. Bonar Law and Professor Hewins, who will be able to give us the best advice it is possible to obtain on this subject when our country is ready to seek their assistance.

Tariff Reform, if wisely adopted, should provide us with ample means to meet our expenditure and make it possible to reduce this exorbitant income tax which has persecuted us in an oppressive manner for far too long. A wise Chancellor will insist on modifying it forthwith. It hinders and handicaps industry, is a constant charge upon working expenses, it prevents people saving what they otherwise would be able to save, and it has greatly

weakened our national power. Power is wealth. And if we continue to overtax the first we shall most assuredly lose the other ; indeed, for the last thirty years we have lost both in a most woeful manner. We are more highly taxed per head of the population than any other country. We are taxed per head just twice as much as are the people of Germany ; hence one of the reasons why they progress and we do not ; and notwithstanding this, we have less to show for it.

We rob, despoil and cripple the man who harbours his resources, and we pet, humour and cherish those who have proved themselves unfit to provide for themselves, those who must have been careless, improvident, and self-indulgent, even if they have been no worse.

Can anything be more mistaken ? It will eventually leave us with a nation of paupers, and when this comes about there will be no pensions for anyone.

I am not totally averse to Old Age Pensions, although it has been proved by the rapidly diminished contributions to all provident Societies,

Benevolent Associations and the like, that people have undoubtedly ceased to make provision for the future since Old Age Pensions came in, and have withdrawn their savings. It would thus appear, on the face of things, to scare thrift, frighten prudence, and abolish foresight. But if we must have pensions, then without any manner of doubt they should be contributory. The one who is to receive the benefit must help. Let him put all he can save in the Savings Bank. The State can double what he saves. But to directly give food or money to the populace for bad behaviour will ruin any State, just as it did Rome and Athens. Those who are now receiving Old Age Pensions must, of course, continue to have them, but where new names come on the register it will be wise to stipulate that their pensions should be contributory. It is far more essential to lower the burden of the income tax than to nourish and create paupers, and any Chancellor who cannot, with the help of Tariff Reform, see his way to making an alteration in our great handicap can only be considered an enemy to his own country, and a lamentably bad treasurer for the resources of Great

Britain. We have no Chancellor who is man enough to carry out this reform without the voice of public opinion behind him ; therefore, it behoves you, the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, to follow in the wake of your ancestors, the Anglo-Saxons, and rise against an unbearable injustice which you have suffered far too long either for your own welfare or for the prosperity of your race. Reduce the income tax and abolish the Death Duties, and our national wealth will begin to recover itself.

Wishing you all good results in your rational campaign,

I remain, dear Taxpayers,

Truly your friend,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

ELEVENTH LETTER.

“THE ONLY WAY TO HAVE A
FRIEND IS TO BE ONE.”

Emerson.

TO THOSE WHO LOVE THE BRITISH FLAG.

DEAR FRIENDS,—

If you care for the British Flag as I myself love it, and if the sight of it floating in the breeze above Universities, Hospitals, Municipal Buildings, Post Offices, Quays, Wharves, and Ships brings before your eyes all that it conjures up before mine, then indeed are you my friends and I am proud to have been introduced to you.

For the same British flag stands for some of the most heroic deeds, some of the most glorious undertakings, and some of the most brilliant performances which have been accomplished by men. Some of the noblest ideas which spirit has conceived, brain has developed, or manhood has achieved. And if we think of all it means we are at once brought face to face with a long list of magnificent patriots whose fame and glory take one's breath away and cause one to exclaim, "If only I had lived in those days and could help my nation as they did!"

My very dear friend, the opportunity is now at hand, you can do all that they did and more. The great men have seized their chances, we have the chance, and all we require is a man who will take it, a great Prime Minister. We can put the finishing touch to all that had gone before in order that it may stand the test of time and endure for the future.

Instead of remaining quiescent and hoping that others will do the work which is crying aloud to be done let us gird our loins, shoulder our responsibilities, and meet our destiny with such genuinely wise combination of efforts that the results of our united actions shall be far-reaching, world-encompassing, and omnipotent.

Do we still wish to see our honoured flag float in the breeze throughout the four quarters of the globe ?

East and west and north and south, wherever the English language is spoken. Then we must act immediately when the next Unionist Government comes in, for time presses. I believe the destiny of our British Empire is waiting to be settled within the next five years, or possibly it may be ten.

We must strengthen the foundations throughout, build firmer bulwarks and rear stronger fortifications, and if we wish the Empire to remain as it is, we should manufacture a stout piece of Imperial Unionism and complete the construction of the Federated Dominions of Greatest Britain, instead of talking about England and her Colonies.

Let us leave off considering ourselves the inhabitants of a tiny little island whose tight skin we have outgrown and let Great Britain become the heart of our mighty Empire. But let her show respect and trust for all the other States of which she is composed. We should accomplish this feat within the next few years when the next Unionist Government come into existence and when we have found a Prime Minister who can lead. Otherwise we shall follow the long list of Empires which have fought, have conquered, have ruled, and then, by becoming lazy, indifferent, and unwarlike, have faded, succumbed, and perished. Such transitory powers were Athens, Carthage, Rome, Venice, Holland, Spain, and many others. All were great in their day, and all passed away for want of a lasting policy

consolidating their possessions and setting a seal upon their greatness.

We have finer opportunities than they ever had. We own greater possessions, we command better possibilities, we have learnt from their histories, we have seen their errors, and therefore—if we are wise—we can learn how to avoid the same mistakes.

And how are our Colonial possessions, our vast possibilities, our great opportunities scattered all over the face of the world to be welded into one living, breathing, dominating Empire ?

By that same Union Jack which we all like to see floating in the breeze and by that same Navy of which every Briton is proud.

You may have wondered in reading my previous letters to various people that no word of our Navy has been mentioned.

It is not that it has been overlooked or forgotten. It is because our ships, our naval men, and our Navy are so important and are of such vital significance to us that they claim one letter or even several letters dedicated to themselves, and they could

not be treated in other letters that only concerned Great Britain.

Our maritime shipping, our oversea trade, and our Navy created Greater Britain or the British Empire.

They have been the foundations of our "being." They were the reason of our "having." They will be the future means of our "holding." The British Empire can only exist through its right to rule the waves, through its Navy which guards its possessions.

The British Empire must "Sein, Haben und Werden" through her fleet or her strength will fade, her possessions disappear, and her power decay.

How may we maintain this supremacy of the seas, which has been ours for well nigh a century?

There is only one solution, as simple as it is great. This is the only way.

To tell our brethren beyond the seas, who once were regarded in the light of children, but who have now most certainly reached man's estate and therefore can be treated as adults, to inform these same brethren, who are every bit as strong and as

wise as ourselves, that the Motherland wishes to avail herself of their help, their assistance, and their concurrence. That Great Britain asks her offspring to join in her family conclave in order that they may give us the benefit of their youth and vitality, whilst we reciprocate by giving them the advantage of our wisdom and experience.

Let us tell all the component parts of the British Empire that we wish to discuss together as *equals* the best method of maintaining our supremacy of the seas and to find out what important changes should be made in order that Britannia may still continue to rule the waves. The far-away portions of the Empire are all realising the fact that hitherto we have held the seas for them, but that now it is only becoming that they should take a fair share in the expense of the undertaking. They are all cogitating how they can best co-operate with us either by giving us "Dreadnoughts" or in the direction of creating a Navy of their own. This shows that they are alive to the fact that it is advisable that they should render help and assistance in this important matter, and it shows that

they are desirous of doing the best they can to share the burden of that which has now become an Imperial need, and which should be placed upon an Imperial basis. Let us be wise enough to accept their friendly assistance and meet the extended hand with a pair of our own, and let us together devise the form which an Imperial Navy should take. If His Majesty, who is always ready to promote the welfare of his subjects in whichever hemisphere they may live, would graciously appoint a Royal Commission which may journey through the Colonies and discuss the matter with their leading men, it might be extremely helpful.

There was an Imperial Conference held in London in 1908, but the representatives who had travelled far to come were so rudely treated by ministers then in power that we cannot expect them to wish to come again to us, unless we apologise for bad behaviour and humbly invite them to repeat their visits. But, personally, I am strongly of opinion that it would be better to go in turn to them, and by so doing create an interest in the question whilst on their native ground. The matter to be discussed

when the Royal Commission meets the leaders of the various States, Dominions, Commonwealths, is the absolute necessity for forming an Imperial Navy and how this may best be accomplished.

It should be a Navy that has its home as much throughout Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand as in the British Isles.

A Navy in which the Colonials join in serving, in building, in manning, and in commanding on terms of perfect equality with ourselves.

An Imperial Navy, which all members of the Empire support, maintain, and uphold, and which is rendered efficient by the united efforts of parents, children, and grand-children.

And because it is against all the traditions, the history, or the laws of the Anglo-Saxon race to take subsidies or assistance without in return offering "representation," we must make all those who are willing to help, participate not only in Tariff Reform, but also in Imperial Federation. Tariff Reform is sound, is right, is good, but it is not enough; it will bind us more closely together commercially, but we must also create bonds of sympathy and

sentiment, and mutual interest by adding a Federated Empire to support and organise an Imperial Navy, and such a Navy, receiving the help and the assistance of the whole of the British Empire, will indeed command the waves, rule the ocean and maintain supremacy at sea.

Nothing else will suffice in the future. In the present we have two rivals on the water. One a friendly power of 80,000,000 people with very deep pockets and a navy second to ours ; and the other, an unfriendly, jealous rival with 60,000,000 people and a navy that is growing much faster than our own.

If we look in front of us, at things as they are and not as we fancy they might be, we can perceive that no other Navy other than an Imperial Navy will suffice for our requirements in the future. Other powers are putting forth their whole force to build ships and possess sea power ; we are probably using only half, nay, not even half of our available strength or force.

The British Isles has a Navy, but Greater Britain has none !

Let the two combine into one colossal whole, *i.e.*, the Navy of the United Dominions of Greatest Britain, and the game will be won. In this simple way of turning to our children instead of always chiding them, and in this manner of using our full strength and asking the great Continents which are ours beyond the seas to share in the expense of an Imperial Navy, we shall form an impregnable base for all operations, and shall be ready to face the world.

There should be training ships and naval colleges where youths may learn to become sailors and study naval science started in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and any other suitable locality where the Colony suggests it. Our far-away brethren should be asked to help man the ships, to enter the Imperial Navy, and to train for taking command as well. We must also encourage them to start ship-building yards and to build ships which will be paid for out of the Imperial public purse which would be devoted to the navy. We cannot produce ships fast enough ourselves to keep pace with our rivals, but if Canada and Australia assisted us it

would soon quicken the pace, and would help to promote much more interest and enthusiasm for the Navy out there. Then we come to the question of Imperial Federation.

This, of course, needs much discussion in order to find the best means of carrying out a simple, workable plan. But until something better is evolved, I should like to suggest that from fifteen to twenty members are selected from our House of Lords, and another fifteen or twenty from the House of Commons by those bodies themselves, and that the same number be selected from the Canadian, Australian, South African and New Zealand Parliaments, and that these representatives are chosen for five years regardless of whether there is a dissolution or not.

We have more population, they have far greater areas and natural resources, so that the representation might be equivalent. The members from afar would have seen more of the world, probably, than the members from Britain, and would, therefore, be better acquainted with the difficulties to be overcome.

That this Congress of representatives from the United Dominions of the British Empire should meet at the headquarters or governing centres of the various Dominions represented, in rotation, and that some slight advantage might accrue to London, as it is a convenient place for meetings. But it would be so very educational and instructive for our members to see the further vast portions of the Empire that this is the utmost that is advisable ; also, there is the possibility that better work will be carried on away from England, the spirit of loyalty to the British Crown is quite as strong away as it is here at home, where we may be said to have so many diversions that our interests are sometimes withdrawn from the important issues at stake.

The summer and autumn months would probably be found the most convenient period of the year for this Imperial body to meet, and as it would consist of 150 to 200 members, a great deal of business could be carried on in a few months. They need not concern themselves with vestry work as our Parliament does, their chief interests would be the Navy and the Empire.

In order that these suggestions or better ones which are founded upon the idea of consolidating Imperial unity should be brought forward in the next Unionist Government with good result, we must choose a Prime Minister who is tactful and diplomatic, and we must also effect a slight change in ourselves. We should cease calling our brethren beyond the seas Colonials and mentioning Colonies, and we should hail them as makers of Empire and Imperial subjects. Those who have had the best brains, the greatest energy and enterprise, and were able to see before the English did that matters here were wrongly managed, have steamed away to other portions of British lands in the quest of greater freedom and better laws. In many cases they have found both. Such people must in future be treated absolutely as equals, and from what I have seen of them personally in their far-away homes, I might say superiors. The average of intelligence to be found in Greater Britain is of a higher grade than that in Great Britain, for they are unencumbered with cranks, unspoilt by injustice, and unhampered by Socialist Ministers.

All this is greatly in their favour, and if we are wise enough to ask them to join in our Councils and help us to determine the work, it will be well for us and well for them. Together, we should be strong enough to face our rivals, and that stirring song of old,

“Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves,
For Britons never, never shall be slaves,”
will no longer be an echo of the past.

It may become the watchword of the future.

I am, dear friends, whether you live in these tiny British Isles, or whether you are conquering Nature in vaster portions of the British Empire,

Yours in great affection,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.

TWELFTH LETTER.

“WHILST I LIVE, I HOPE.”

LETTER TO MY COMPATRIOTS.

DEAR COMPATRIOTS,—

You have been gracious enough to read the letters which you hold in your hand, and now, in order to make them a round dozen, there is just one more addressed to you personally, after which I shall have said my few words and will wish you “Farewell.”

We all think it is irksome to read letters, but we also know that it is far worse to write them, and many of us obviate this fatigue by using telephones, telegrams, typewriters, secretaries, and the like.

Therefore, although you may not agree with all I have written, you will at any rate admit that I am not a lazy, lethargic person, inasmuch as I have actually used pen, ink and paper in order to post you these epistles, and I have spent my energies in the hope that a few of you may open your eyes and look around. If the outcome of your inspection is that you too wish to act and bring about reforms,

my news will not have been futile waste of time and need not be considered sterile "lapsus calami."

In order to save you trouble in summarising the pith of my letters I will make a little list connecting my suggestions. They are all so simple that it will not detain you two minutes.

1. We want a leader who can lead.

If further proof were needed of the justice of remarks upon Mr. Balfour in letter No. 4, which was written to him *before* the elections had taken place, the recent results of these elections are amply sufficient to prove the truth of my words. We, the Unionists, have lost the chance of bringing in much-needed Reforms because we had no suitable leader, and this country will not follow an unpopular man; why should it? I suggest that the Marquis of Lansdowne be asked by Mr. Balfour to become leader of the Opposition in the country and that Mr. Balfour retains this post in the House of Commons.

If this change be made we may hope to win the battle next time.

Lord Lansdowne has led us well and wisely in several instances as Foreign Secretary, and as the post of Prime Minister necessitates the same diplomatic skill and tactful resource, he might be a competent statesman to inaugurate an Imperial Policy, which is to be hoped the next Unionist Government will do.

2. Tariff Reform is essential.

There are unmistakable signs that it is coming, but this alone is not enough. With Tariff Reform we need

3. An Imperial Navy.

4. A Federated Empire.

5. A National Army.

We want every Briton who calls himself a man to volunteer to give up one twelvemonth of his existence between the ages of nineteen and twenty-two in order to learn to defend his home and, incidentally, his country, otherwise his home may be like the "Englishman's Home" in the play. There will be no possibility of living in it.

History teaches us plainly that unless a race has sufficient warlike propensities to be ready to fight to

keep its country for itself, that eventually some other race descends upon its territory and usurps it. It will be the same for England.

As well as a Minister who will really be Prime Minister, we also urgently require :

6. A Chancellor of the Exchequer who will be sane enough to abolish the Death Duties and reduce the Income Tax.

This, of course, sounds a very easy proposition to any sensible person. But it will require a very strong man to bring about the change, to overhaul our financial chaos and replace it by justice and order. For the high-road of financial honesty was forsaken thirty years ago, when we refused to have Tariff Reform, and since then the Chancellors of the Exchequer have floundered in bye-paths and ditches of wrong legislation, which have finally placed them in a financial morass. Probably the floundering will grow even more pronounced in the Budget of this year. It is just possible that when the worst has been reached we shall consent to be injured no longer and insist upon the many necessary reforms.

It is a well-known fact that the darkest hour is

before the dawn, and that the lowest ebb is just before the rising tide. We have undoubtedly reached our darkest hour after thirty years of financial mis-government. So that there is some ground for trusting that desperation may cause us to make the alterations that are needed:

Changes must come, or we shall decay. These six reforms are all dependent one upon the other, and if we can obtain one or two, the remaining three or four would follow naturally. But let us not delay, dear Compatriots, you have played fast and loose with your opportunities for thirty years, the eleventh hour has now struck in the tall clock-tower that surmounts the destiny of Great Britain.

It is now or never.

Reforms must be carried out by the coming Unionist Administration, or it will be too late. England will cease to exist as a political power, and will gradually become a negligible quantity, as Holland and Spain have done. Great Britain will be no more, and the United Dominions of Greatest Britain, which could be brought into one corporate whole within the next few years, will never exist

to astonish the eyes of mankind or to render the Anglo-Saxon race supreme in the history of the world.

Choose quickly which you will have, and act accordingly.

The decision rests with you and your Ministers.

Let your voice be heard. Be a patriot to the greatest extent of your capability.

If you like my letters or agree with anything that is in them, send me a post card telling me of your approval ; it will encourage me. Also tell me if you are patriotic enough to help to carry out the fifth proposition by allowing those of your family who are the right age to spend a year in military training for the defence of these islands. It will be the foundation of a National Army.

Even should no war ever arise, the training in fresh air, the discipline, the regular life will infinitely benefit the health and the physique of our race, and will tend to abolish paupers and unemployment.

A trained nation can no longer be a slovenly one. And if once it is known that we have men who can

and will fight, the probability of war will be immensely diminished. If we cannot emulate the heroes of old, in deeds of prowess, we can at least, every one of us, strive to become a patriot of to-day.

With all good wishes for the future,

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

A VEILED POLITICIAN.





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